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The Daily News Correspondence

OF

THE WAR BETWEEN

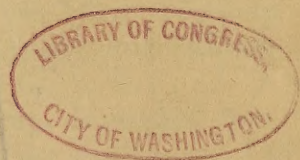
GERMANY AND FRANCE

1870-1

EDITED WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME

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WITH MAPS AND PLANS



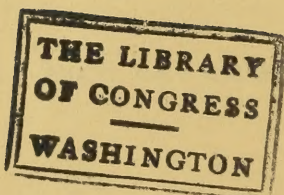
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PREFACE.

THIS volume owes its origin to a desire very generally expressed that the letters of which it is composed, treating of events among the most momentous of any in the memory of this generation, should have a record at once more permanent and more convenient than the files of a daily journal. The special value of letters from camps and battle-fields consists in the vividness with which they reproduce the life and spirit of the scenes and transactions in the midst of which they are written. In the letters which have appeared in the *Daily News* since the beginning of the Franco-Prussian war, the public has recognized this quality as present in an eminent degree.

Their authors, in assenting to the issue of this selection from their correspondence, do not renounce their right severally to publish the entire product of their labours in other forms.

The duties of a Newspaper Correspondent with an army are performed day by day in the face of difficulties and dangers only inferior to those of the enrolled combatant. They are, however, discharged with a cheerful patience, which is sustained by the knowledge that the British public—the most exacting in Europe in its demand for intelligence—honours those whose zeal and enterprise secure to it information earlier, fuller, and often more worthy of credit, than that which the courts and cabinets of Europe can command.

In the present volume the story of the war is related from its Declaration, in the summer of 1870, to the conclusion of a peace crowned by the occupation of Paris. The brilliant triumph of the Germans, and its influence upon civilization, have yet to be tested by time, which, it may be hoped, notwithstanding much that is discouraging, will heal the wounds inflicted on France. Our aim has not been to anticipate the verdict of history, but to present in due order a series of life-like pictures of some of the greatest military events of this century.

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE WAR.

JULY 14, 1870, TO MARCH 2, 1871.

July 14.

The French Government call out the army reserves.

July 15.

M. Ollivier announces in the Legislative Body that France has resolved to make war upon Prussia. Great excitement in Paris, and crowds throng the Boulevards, singing the Marseillaise, and shouting *Vive la guerre!* The King of Prussia arrives at Berlin from Ems, and is received by upwards of 100,000 persons, who cheer him, and sing the National Anthem.

July 16.

The Emperor receives the members of the Senate at St. Cloud, and M. Rouher, in an address, says, "Your Majesty has occupied the last four years in perfecting the armament and the organization of the army." The King of Prussia and the Sovereigns of South Germany order the mobilization of their armies.

July 18.

The Legislative Body grants war credits of 515,000,000 francs.

July 21.

The North German Parliament votes supplies. The first shot of the war is fired in a skirmish near Saarbruck.

July 22.

The Prussians blow up the abutment, on the Baden shore, of the bridge at Kehl.

July 23.

A French envoy notifies to the Prussian Government a declaration of hostilities. The Emperor issues a proclamation, throwing the whole responsibility of the war upon Prussia.

July 24.

Slight skirmishes at Gersweiler and near Saarlouis. Prussian Lancers blow up the viaduct of the French railway between Saarguemines and Hagenau. Admiral Bouet-Willaumez hoists his flag at Cherbourg, and the Empress visits the fleet.

July 28.

The Emperor leaves St. Cloud for the seat of war, and at 7 p.m. enters Metz. Fourteen French cities are proclaimed in a state of siege. The French fleet is seen off Copenhagen.

July 30.

The first detachment of the French Army of Rome arrives at Marseilles.

July 31.

The King of Prussia issues a short address "To my People," amnesties all political offences in consideration of the general uprising, and departs for the seat of war.

Aug. 2.

The French attack and carry the heights commanding Saarbruck, in presence of the Emperor and the Prince Imperial. The French mitrailleuse is used in this engagement for the first time. The *Journal Officiel* declares that the war has been undertaken from a desire to free the South German States and Denmark from the persecutions of Prussia.

Aug. 4.

A Council of War is held at Metz, attended by Marshals MacMahon and Bazaine, at which a plan of operations is agreed upon. On the same day, the Crown Prince of Prussia falls upon a portion of MacMahon's Army Corps at Weissenburg, and all but destroys it. General Abel Douay is killed and 800 prisoners are taken.

Aug. 6.

The Crown Prince attacks MacMahon on the hills above Wörth, and totally defeats him, with the loss of 6,000 men, thirty pieces of artillery, six mitrailleuses, and two eagles. At the same time, General Frossard's Army Corps, which holds the heights above Saarbruck, is attacked and driven back in confusion and with loss upon Metz. In Paris, a false report of a grand victory of MacMahon, who was said to have captured the Crown Prince of Prussia and his army, causes unbounded enthusiastic excitement. Suddenly it is found that the report is false, and the reaction is terrible.

Aug. 7.

A telegram from the Emperor Napoleon announces the disasters of the previous day, and adds, "All may yet be well." The Empress convokes the Chambers; the people demand arms; the department of the Seine is declared in a state of siege, and a permanent Council of the Ministry is established at the Tuileries.

Aug. 8.

The Imperial Guard, and Bazaine's, Ladmirault's, and Frossard's corps, with a portion of Canrobert's corps, concentrate at Metz.

Aug. 9.

The Chambers meet, and the Ollivier Ministry resigns. Strasburg is partially invested.

Aug. 10.

The French Army concentrates at Metz. Count Palikao forms a new Administration.

Aug. 11.

The King of Prussia addresses a Proclamation to the French people warning them not to mingle in hostilities, and promises protection to peaceable citizens.

Aug. 14.

The Prussians attack the French, late in the afternoon, near Pange and Courcelles; the fight is arrested by darkness under the walls of Metz: both sides claim the victory. The Emperor issues a farewell address at Metz, and leaves the fortress. Nancy is occupied by Prussian cavalry.

Aug. 15.

Bazaine having been appointed Commander-in-Chief, a movement of retreat begins from Metz to Verdun, and is embarrassed by Prussians near Gravelotte.

Aug. 16.

The march is resumed, and the van of Prince Frederick Charles's army, 30,000 strong, attacks Bazaine's whole army at Mars-la-Tour, under the apprehension that it is the rear-guard. A sanguinary conflict is sustained by the Prussians against superior numbers for seven hours, until the Hanoverian Corps and some Rhenish regiments turn the tide of battle, and the French are driven back.

Aug. 17.

General Trochu is appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the forces in Paris.

Aug. 18.

The attempt to cut off Bazaine's retreat is resumed, and the bloody battle of Gravelotte is fought, lasting all day, and resulting in the retiring of Bazaine into the entrenched camp of Metz.

Aug. 20.

The Camp of Châlons is broken up and the tents are burned.

Aug. 21.

MacMahon enters Rheims.

Aug. 22.

MacMahon leaves for Rethel. The Crown Prince of Saxony assumes the command of 80,000 troops to operate in the Ardennes.

Aug. 25.

MacMahon leaves Rethel, directing his army upon Montmédy by Mézières and Vouziers.

Aug. 26.

Bazaine makes an attempt to break out of Metz on the Courcelles road, but is repulsed.

Aug. 29.

MacMahon encamps with 100,000 men at Vaux, between Mouzon and Carignan, and De Failly between Beaumont and Stonne.

Aug. 30.

De Failly, on the left bank of the Meuse, and MacMahon on the right, are attacked, and lose 7,000 prisoners, with twenty guns and camp equipment. The Emperor narrowly escapes to Sedan.

Aug. 31.

A desultory engagement between the plain of Douzy and Bazeilles. The French fall back on Sedan. Bazaine makes a strenuous and sustained attempt to break out towards Thionville.

Sept. 1.

A great and decisive action fought before and around Sedan. Thousands of French escape to the Belgian frontier. 20,000 French prisoners are made.

Sept. 2.

Marshal MacMahon having been wounded, and transferred his command to General Wimpffen, the latter signs a capitulation, surrendering the whole army—80,000 men—prisoners of war. An immense quantity of military stores, cannons, including mitrailleuses, and horses, fall into the victors' hands. The Emperor sends his sword to the King of Prussia, who appoints him a residence as a prisoner of war.

Sept. 4.

The advance guard of the German army at Sedan sets out for Paris. At Paris, the French Emperor is declared to have forfeited the rights conferred by the Constitution, and a new Government of National Defence is formed.

Sept. 5.

The King of Prussia enters Rheims.

Sept. 10.

General Hame, commanding at Laon, surrenders the citadel in order to save the town. After the Prussians have entered, an explosion takes place, in which fifty Prussians and 300 Gardes Mobiles are killed. General Hame is placed under arrest (but subsequently declared innocent) by the Prussians.

An order of the Government requires the owners of provisions and forage in the neighbourhood of Paris to remove them to the capital.

Sept. 19.

The Germans arrive in force before Paris. General Ducrot engages a Bavarian corps on the heights of Châtillon, and is defeated.

Sept. 20.

The last regular mail goes out of Paris.

Sept. 21.

The investment of Paris is completed. A German force appears at Nemours and Pithiviers.

Sept. 23.

Toul capitulates.

Sept. 27.

The garrison and fortress of Strasburg are surrendered, 17,000 men laying down their arms.

Sept. 30.

A sortie from Paris, towards Chevilly and L'Hay.

Oct. 5.

The head-quarters of the King of Prussia are removed to Versailles.

Oct. 7.

Marshal Bazaine makes a great sortie from Metz, and, after fighting for five hours, is repulsed with a loss of 2,500 men.

Oct. 10.

General Reyan, commanding a division of the French Army of the Loire, is defeated at Artenay by General von der Tann, and loses 2,000 prisoners.

Oct. 11.

The Germans occupy Orleans.

Oct. 16.

Soissons capitulates.

Oct. 24.

Schelestadt capitulates.

Oct. 27.

The army of Marshal Bazaine and the fortress of Metz capitulate. 173,000 prisoners, including three marshals and sixty-six generals, surrender, and 3,000 cannon are taken.

Nov. 8.

Verdun capitulates.

Nov. 9.

General von der Tann is defeated at Coulmiers and Baccon by General d'Aurelle de Paladine, and Orleans is re-occupied by the French.

Nov. 10.

Neu Breisach capitulates.

Nov. 17.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, with the right wing of the Prussian covering army south of Paris, assumes the offensive, drives the French out of Dreux, and advances towards Le Mans.

Nov. 19.

A band of 560 men, under Ricciotti Garibaldi, surprises a detachment of 800 Prussians at Châtillon-sur-Seine, and make 160 prisoners.

Nov. 22.

Twenty thousand Prussians occupy Bellême, in the department of Orne.

Nov. 24.

Thionville capitulates.

Nov. 26.

The Garibaldians, under the leadership of their General, attack the Prussians near Dijon, and are repulsed, the Mobiles being seized with panic, and throwing the whole corps into confusion.

Nov. 27.

The French Army of the North defeated at Buchy, near Amiens. La Fère capitulates.

Nov. 28.

General Manteuffel enters Amiens. General d'Aurelle attacks the east wing of the Prussian Army of the Loire at Beaune-le-Roland: each side claims the victory.

Nov. 29.

A heavy fire from all the forts of Paris is followed by a sortie under Vinoy in the direction of L'Hay, due south of Paris, which is repulsed.

Nov. 30.

Generals Trochu and Ducrot, with 90,000 men, make a sortie against the Würtemberg and Saxon positions, south-east of Paris, and occupy Champigny, Brie, and Villiers; a less important attack being made at the same time north-east of Paris.

Dec. 1.

General Chanzy, with the 16th Corps of the Army of the Loire, attacks General von der Tann near Patay, and defeats him, in an engagement lasting six hours.

Dec. 2.

The Würtembergers and Saxons before Paris retake the positions lost two days before. Another sortie from Paris follows; the positions are found untenable by the Germans. The Duke of Mecklenburg defeats the left wing of the French Army of the Loire, which had been victorious the day before, and inflicts very heavy loss upon it. Prince Frederick Charles, by manœuvring, separates the centre and right of the French Army of the Loire, and drives the former on the road to Orleans.

Dec. 4.

The German army, concentrated, pushes the French, under General d'Aurelle, back upon Orleans, and demands the evacuation of that city. General Ducrot withdraws his entire army from the east of the Marne, and announces that a new sortie will be attempted, under more favourable circumstances.

Dec. 5.

The Germans enter Orleans at 1 A.M. Count Moltke sends intelligence of the fact to General Trochu.

Dec. 7.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg is attacked by General Chanzy between Meung and Beaugency, and a contest begins which continues for four days.

Dec. 8.

The Germans capture Beaugency, with 1,100 prisoners and six guns.

Dec. 9.

The battle of Beaugency continued. Dieppe occupied by a detachment of General Manteuffel's army.

Dec. 10.

The seat of the French Government is transferred to Tours. Ham capitulates to the French, who take 200 prisoners. General Chanzy concentrates his forces, and retires to the Forest of Marchenoir.

Dec. 12.

Phalsburg surrenders, its garrison of 1,800 men becoming prisoners of war.

Dec. 14.

Montmédy capitulates, its garrison of 3,000 becoming prisoners. General Chanzy is attacked at Vendôme and Fréteval.

Dec. 16.

Vendôme evacuated by the French, and Fréteval abandoned.

Dec. 18.

The Germans capture Nuits after five hours' severe fighting.

Dec. 20.

The Tenth German Corps attack 6,000 Mobs near Monnaie, and drive them to Nôtre-Dame d'Oé, near Tours. The Germans evacuate Nuits.

Dec. 21.

The garrison of Paris make sorties against Stains, Le Bourget, Sevran, and Ville Evrart. After several hours' hard fighting the French are repulsed, but leave detachments at Ville Evrart and Maison Blanche. The Germans appear at Tours, and meeting with resistance, throw shells into it. The Mayor comes forward and asks for terms, but the Germans retire.

Dec. 23.

An indecisive action is fought at Pont-Noyelles, between the French Army of the North under General Faidherbe, and a portion of the German First Army under General Manteuffel.

Dec. 25.

Six English coal-vessels are sunk by the Prussians in the Seine, at Duclair, the port of Rouen.

Dec. 27.

The German siege artillery opens fire upon the entrenched position of Mont Avron. The German troops under General Glumer evacuate Dijon, retiring upon Vesoul.

Dec. 28.

The batteries of Mont Avron are silenced.

Dec. 29.

The Germans visit Mont Avron, and direct the fire of their siege batteries upon the north-east forts.

Dec. 31.

The Germans bombard Mézières.

Jan. 2, 1871.

Mézières capitulates, the Germans making 2,000 prisoners. General von Göben is attacked in the villages north of Bapaume.

Jan. 3.

Bapaume is attacked by the French under General Faidherbe, who gain possession of a portion of the town. In the night, General Faidherbe retires for want of supplies.

Jan. 4.

The Second German Army, under Prince Frederick Charles, begins a movement of concentration towards Vendôme.

Jan. 5.

The forts of the southern front of the defences of Paris are bombarded. The fortress of Rocroi surrenders.

Jan. 6.

Victory of Prince Frederick Charles before Vendôme; and defeat of Duke William of Mecklenburg, near St. Amand.

Jan. 10.

Battle of Changé, the Germans victorious with heavy loss.

Jan. 11.

Battle of Le Mans, severe fighting with apparently indecisive results, but General Chanzy, after the Breton Mobiles have given way, orders a retreat.

Jan. 12.

Attack on the Germans at Les Noyers, to cover French retreat; the Germans enter Le Mans.

Jan. 13.

Prince Frederick Charles establishes his head-quarters in Le Mans. General Schmidt captures the stores of the camp at Conlie. General Bourbaki captures Arcey and St. Marie.

Jan. 15.

General von Werder is seriously attacked by General Bourbaki before Chagey, but maintains his positions. General Chanzy issues an order of the day stigmatizing the "shameful cowardice" of a portion of his troops before Le Mans.

Jan. 16.

General Bourbaki renews his attack on Von Werder with increased forces, but fails to move him. Colonel Isnard, by orders of General Faidherbe, recaptures St. Quentin.

Jan. 17.

Longwy is invested. Bourbaki renews his attack, and again failing orders a general retreat.

Jan. 18.

The King of Prussia assumes the title and dignity of Emperor. General von Göben attacks General Faidherbe, and drives him to St. Quentin.

Jan. 19.

Generals Trochu, Vinoy, and Ducrot head a grand sortie from Paris, with 100,000 men, who, fighting all day, gain some ground, and then retreat. General Faidherbe is defeated in a decisive battle, and driven through and beyond St. Quentin with enormous loss.

Jan. 20.

General Trochu requests an armistice of two days to bury his dead—it is refused.

Jan. 21.

Dijon is attacked by Prussian corps of Manteuffel's Fifth Army, on their way to co-operate with Von Werder against Bourbaki. The attack is repulsed by Garibaldi. Dôle is occupied by the Germans, who capture 230 railway waggons laden with provisions, forage, and clothing.

Jan. 23.

Renewed Prussian attack and repulse at Dijon.

Jan. 24.

M. Jules Favre appears at Versailles, and inquires for Count Bismarck.

Jan. 25.

Longwy capitulates.

Jan. 28.

M. Jules Favre signs an Armistice-Convention, giving the Germans possession of all the forts around Paris, and recognizing the army of Paris—Line, Mobiles, and sailors—as prisoners of war, and making the city liable to a war contribution of £8,000,000.

Jan. 29.

Mont Valérien and the other forts are occupied by the Germans.

Jan. 30.

Large numbers of the troops of General Bourbaki's army cross the Swiss frontier.

Feb. 1.

General Clinchamp, commanding the army lately under Bourbaki, signs a convention with General Herzog, under which 80,000 French troops pass into Switzerland.

Feb. 8.

Elections to the National Assembly take place throughout France.

Feb. 12.

Meeting of the National Assembly at Bordeaux.

Feb. 13.

The members of the Government of National Defence lay down their powers.

Feb. 16.

The Armistice is extended from the 19th to the 24th of February.

Feb. 17.

M. Thiers appointed Chief of the Executive Government of France.

Feb. 22.

Further extension of the Armistice to February 26.

Feb. 26.

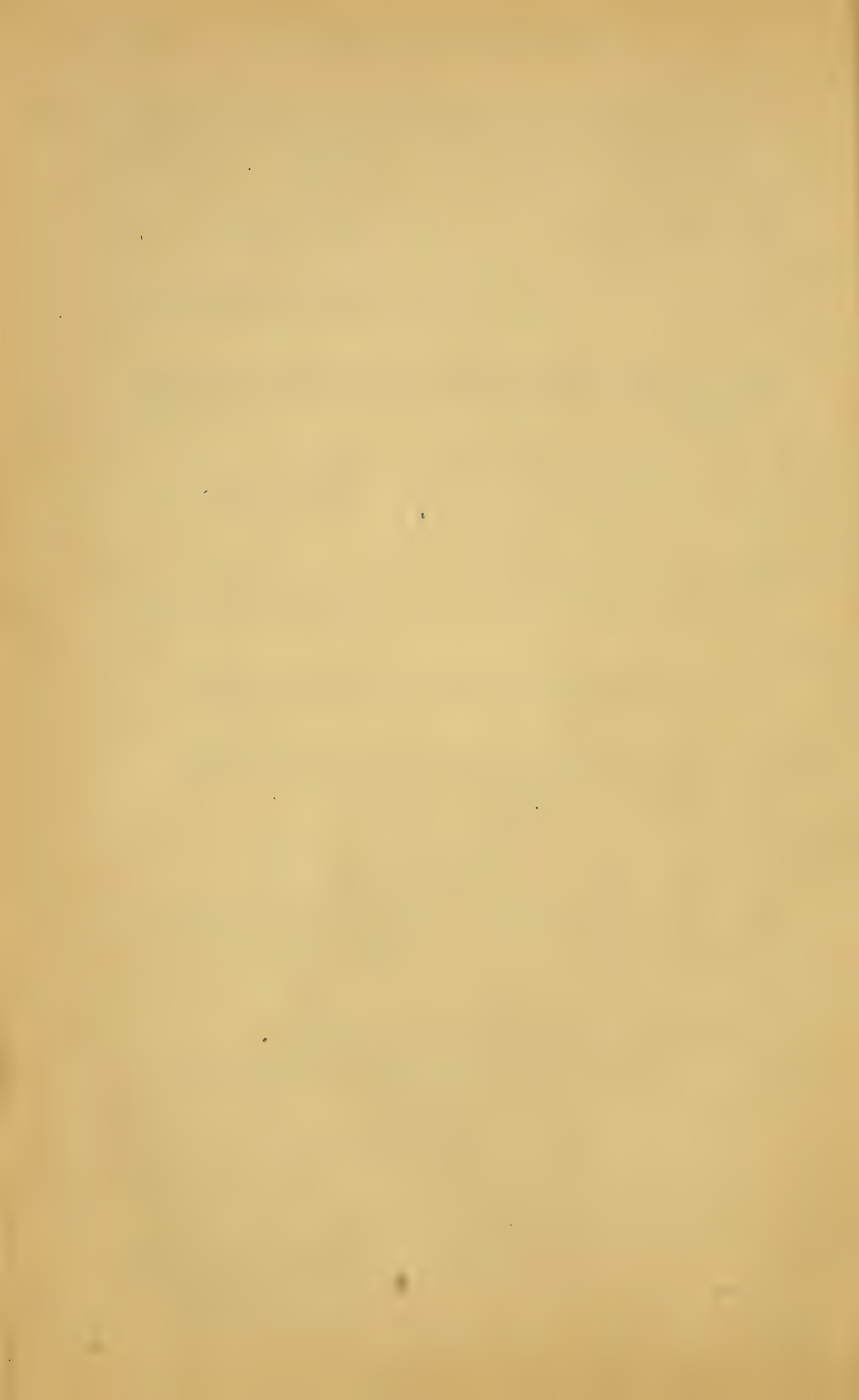
Signature of a Treaty of Peace.

Mar. 1.

Entry of German troops into Paris. Ratification of the Treaty of Peace by the National Assembly.

Mar. 2.

The German troops evacuate Paris.



THE WAR CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE

“DAILY NEWS.”

CHAPTER I.

ON the 5th of July, 1870, an Englishman might have read his newspaper, transacted business in the City, visited his club or the House of Commons, and returned to his family, without having once been asked what he thought of the stability of the peace of Europe. It was on that day that Earl Granville took possession of the Foreign Office, and in so doing was told by the able permanent head of that department that “in all his experience he had never known so great a lull in foreign affairs.” Four-and-twenty hours afterwards the merchant was reviewing his liabilities, the banker his reserves, the capitalist his commitments; for there were signs that a storm was at hand. The Generals who controlled the destinies of Spain had made an agreement under which Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a kinsman of the King of Prussia, but in one of the *lignes non-régnantes* of his house, should be presented to the Cortes as their candidate for the vacant Spanish throne, and the public was quick to perceive that such a project would certainly excite the susceptibilities of France, which, since Sadowa, had been keen to apprehend and swift to resent any movements tending to increase the European influence of the Prussian state. At Paris, the news caused a violent outbreak of political feeling, and even the most moderate and enlightened of the French journals appealed to the national sentiment in the language of passion. The *Temps* exclaimed that the monarchy of Charles V. was being revived, and the *Débats* refused to believe that a scheme so monstrous was possible. When it was announced at Madrid that Prince Leopold gave his consent, and that the Cortes would be invited to elect him King, the French Government at once declared, in the Legislature, by the mouth of the

Duc de Gramont, that the scheme "imperilled the interests and honour of France." The French newspapers ostentatiously announced that they were no longer able to publish announcements relating to the movements of troops. M. Benedetti, the French Minister at the Court of Berlin, went to seek the King of Prussia at Ems. The influence of England was at once exerted both at Paris and at Berlin, to avert the threatening danger, and on the 8th of July Lord Lyons received from the Duc de Gramont the assurance that the voluntary renunciation of his candidature by Prince Leopold would be "a most fortunate solution" of the difficulty.

On the 10th, the Duc de Gramont changed his language, and said that the King of Prussia having given his consent—that of the head of the family—to the Prince's candidature, "the affair had become beyond all controversy one between France and the King." On the 12th, Prince Leopold notified to the French Government that he had renounced his candidature, and Lord Lyons thereupon pointed out to the Duc de Gramont that all cause of war was now removed. The French Minister replied that France was very much excited, and that the Government could not go down to the Chamber without announcing that it had received "some satisfaction" from the King of Prussia. To the Prussian Minister at Paris, it was intimated that the King might immediately put an end to the crisis if he would write a letter of apology to the Emperor. To Lord Lyons it was stated, that if the King would lay his royal command upon the Prince Leopold not to resume his candidature at any future time, peace might be preserved. On the other hand, Count Bismarck was explaining to the British Minister at Berlin, that France owed a reparation to the wounded feelings of Germany, and that its Government must give some guarantee against the repetition of these attacks on her tranquillity, if confidence was to be restored. Prince Leopold had renounced his candidature, and this was the time for the French Government to do justice to Germany, by publicly acknowledging the moderate and peaceful bearing of the King and Government of Prussia throughout these transactions. While these contradictory views were being asserted at Paris and Berlin, M. Benedetti was preparing, more or less consciously, at Ems the occasion of a decisive rupture between the two Powers. On the morning of July 13th, the King of Prussia, walking on the Fountain Promenade at Ems, saw the French Ambassador, and gave him an extra number of the *Cologne Gazette*, containing an announcement that Prince Leopold had renounced his candidature. M. Benedetti observed that he was already aware of the fact, and on the King proceeding to speak of the matter as at length settled, the French Minister made the unexpected re-

quest that His Majesty should give a distinct assurance that he would never again give his consent to that candidature, should it be revived. This the King firmly declined to do, although M. Benedetti again and again urged his proposal. Some hours afterwards, the French Minister sought a further audience, stating that he wished to recur to the subject spoken of in the morning. The King refused a fresh audience on the ground that he could return no other answer than the one already given, and intimated that all further negotiations must proceed regularly through his Ministers. On the 14th of July M. Benedetti left Ems, after an informal but amicable leave-taking of the King. On the same evening, the Berlin journals published a short communicated paragraph, announcing that after the renunciation of Prince Leopold had been officially communicated to the French Government, the French Ambassador, at Ems, had further demanded certain engagements of the King, and that "His Majesty thereon declined to receive the French Ambassador again, and had told him, by the adjutant in attendance, that His Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador." It was this communication that the French Government put forward as the determining cause of the war. On the 15th of July, the Duc de Gramont told Lord Lyons that "the Prussian Government had deliberately insulted France, by declaring to the public that the King had affronted the French Ambassador. It was evidently the intention of the Government of Prussia to take credit with the people of Germany for having acted with haughtiness and discourtesy—in fact, to humiliate France." On the same day, M. Ollivier read in the Corps Législatif a communication, which was received by that body, and throughout Europe, as equivalent to a declaration of war. After describing the course of the negotiations, and adopting the final demands of M. Benedetti upon the King of Prussia, M. Ollivier said that, "under these circumstances, the Government would have forgotten its dignity, and also its prudence, had it not made preparations. We have," said the Minister, "prepared to maintain the war which is offered to us, leaving to each that portion of the responsibility which devolves upon him. Since yesterday we have called out the reserves, and we shall take the necessary measures to guard the interest, and the security, and the honour of France." This declaration was received with enthusiastic and prolonged applause. The *Constitutionnel* published an article concluding with exclamations—"Prussia insults us, let us cross the Rhine. The soldiers of Jena are ready!" The Boulevards were thronged with students and others, marching in procession, and crying, "À bas la Prusse!"—"À bas Bismarck!"—"Vive la guerre!" and "À Berlin!"

In Berlin, the patriotic feeling of the people was as deeply excited, and as freely expressed. Late in the evening of the 15th, the King arrived in the capital, and was received with indescribable enthusiasm. Upwards of 100,000 persons were assembled from the Railway Station at the Brandenburg Gate to the Palace, cheering and singing the national anthem. The promenade Unter den Linden was illuminated, and decorated with the North German and Prussian flags. King William came forward repeatedly to the windows of the Palace, saluting and thanking the crowd. Addresses were also received by the King from the merchants of Bremen and Stettin, expressing readiness to make the utmost sacrifices for the defence of the country, and promising approval to the most energetic steps that might be taken for the preservation of the national honour; and throughout the country, similar manifestations were common.

From this time, although the formal declaration of war was delayed for a few days, each Government was committed to the struggle, and began its military preparations in earnest. In France it was believed—except by a few persons who had the reputation of believing nothing that was creditable to the Empire—that the preparations of the French army for war were as complete as its military superiority to every army of Europe was notorious. Questions, however, were asked on the subject, and Marshal Lebœuf, the French Minister of War, declared before a committee of the Corps Législatif, that the army was “ready—aye, thrice ready—for war;” and that no further grant of time was required to perfect its efficiency. The reserves were called out, and absentees were summoned to rejoin their corps. Day after day regiments passed through Paris on their way to the Rhine, receiving on their progress the most gratifying marks of popular sympathy. The organization and regimental composition of a vast French army was at once announced to the world. Seven Army Corps, under marshals and generals who had maintained and increased the renown of France at Magenta and Solferino, at Rome, in Mexico, and in Algeria, were stationed on a line extending from Thionville on the Moselle to Belfort, which, in the Gap of that name, guards the approaches to Central France against any attacks proceeding from Germany. The Fourth Corps, under General Ladmirault, was near Thionville; the Second, under General Frossard, was near St. Avold; the Fifth, under General de Failly, was at Bitsche; and the First, under Marshal MacMahon, was in and around Strasburg. The Seventh Corps, under General Felix Douay, was at Belfort. Behind Ladmirault, and near Metz, was Marshal Bazaine, with his Third Corps; the Sixth Corps, under Marshal Canrobert, was at Châlons; and the Imperial Guard, under General Bourbaki, was on its way from Paris to act as a

reserve. Various estimates of the strength of these corps were circulated. It was common, towards the end of July, to assume in discussion that from 300,000 to 400,000 men stood under the Imperial eagles, waiting for the order to advance against the enemy. The journal at that time commanding the largest circulation in Paris declared that "France had never before brought so fine an army into the field in so short a time." Confidence was greatly increased by the information given as to the superior arms with which the French troops took the field. The infantry were armed with the Chassepôt, believed to be the queen of rifles; and forty-two batteries of mitrailleuses—a new and murderous weapon—had been despatched to Metz.

The leading English newspapers, apprehending the historical importance of this war, made preparations for obtaining information on a scale which had never been surpassed in the history of the European newspaper press, and gentlemen of military as well as literary experience offered themselves, to follow and record the movements and operations of the hostile armies. But the French Government was slow to authorize the presence of neutral observers within the lines of its armies, and in the end that authorization was distinctly refused. The interview of a special correspondent with M. Emile Ollivier, described in the *Daily News* of July 20th, not only shows the nature of the difficulties thrown in the way of English observers, but is interesting as disclosing the feeling of the French Government towards England at the commencement of the war:—

I have been twice to-day to the hotel of the Minister of War, to ask for a safe-conduct which would allow of my passing freely through the camps. In both cases I was informed with distressing politeness that the subject of correspondents was one to which the Minister of War had not yet devoted his attention, but that I might, if I chose and could get there, repair to the command of any one of the generals. Once there, everything would rest with them. It was considerably added, that there was a possibility of generals disliking correspondents, and of either arresting them or sending them back to Paris. Having an introduction to M. Emile Ollivier, I managed to obtain access to a secretary, who kindly informed me that M. Ollivier was then at St. Cloud, and would be at the Legislature at noon, but possibly might be at home at one. At one I returned, and a little later M. Ollivier received me. I had expected he would simply inform me whether I could obtain the desired safe-conduct or not; but when I found that he entered into more general subjects, I asked whether I might communicate to you his conversation—a permission which he granted without reserve. I

will accordingly try to give the conversation as I heard his share of it, well knowing the great difficulty of reducing such a verbal communication to writing. M. Ollivier began by telling me that the War Minister, General Lebœuf, objected to all foreign correspondents, and also to French ones. He would positively have no writer with the French army, or at least such was the present determination, which might indeed be afterwards modified. He then expressed his extreme sorrow at the attitude of the English Press, which he said was based upon a complete misapprehension of the true causes of the war. M. Ollivier seemed not so much vexed or annoyed, as grieved at the comments in our journals. He complained that the Emperor had always been more than friendly towards England, that he himself had done everything to promote warm relations between the two countries, that especially he had studied the commercial interests of England, but that now he was accused of breaking the peace of Europe. As to Germany, he had taken office on the condition that there should be no German war; the Emperor, too, was well aware of the responsibility involved, and most anxious not to destroy the state of peace; but it was impossible to permit Prussia to drag them through the mud by an insult openly and publicly avowed. Indeed, in the legitimate interests of the dynasty, M. Ollivier had been obliged to entertain the idea of war. France could not brook an insult, or at least a deliberate one. Her rulers, under Louis Philippe, had, it is true, once made her swallow one, but this was the cause of the downfall of the Orleanist family. The exact sequence of events which caused the war was as follows:—The Prussian King had at first made concessions. This had aroused against him a German war party; to conciliate this body he had given France an insult and published it (it was the publication upon which M. Ollivier most dwelt). The Chassepôt must now decide; but as France was united to a man, there was no doubt of the eventual result. I have tried to exactly report what M. Ollivier said, but I can convey to you no idea of the power—the “verve” would, perhaps, be the best word—with which he spoke. I asked his permission to argue the question why correspondents should be excluded from the field. This permission he gave as a matter of course, and I then pointed out that if two parties were engaged in a quarrel, and that if English correspondents were welcomed by one side and excluded by the other, it was only believing in human nature to suppose that the combatants whose hopes, whose fears, whose struggles, were painted each day to educated England, would at length become mistress of English sympathies. I instanced the war in 1866, in which

England undoubtedly at first sympathized with the Austrians, but in which the correspondents, encouraged by one party, snubbed and muzzled by the other, to an immense extent helped to bring English opinion round to Northern Germany. I also gave him one instance in which, to my personal knowledge, the Prussians had sought for an English writer in the present war. I pointed out how easily correspondents might be controlled so as to prevent their giving hurtful information of the massing of troops, &c.

To an unexpected extent M. Ollivier acquiesced in these arguments; but I fear it was the acquiescence of politeness, not of conviction. He promised to report them all to General Lebœuf, who he distinctly gave me to understand was the real arbiter in this matter. So closed my audience. As to M. Ollivier's manner while it continued, the only faint idea that I can give of its perfection is to say that all through I had great difficulty in remembering the exalted position which he holds, so completely did he put me at my ease and treat me on a footing of equality.

I have now to make a few remarks upon the above, but not as to the political questions. They are no doubt important, but they are not within my *métier*. As to the correspondent question, with all my respect for General Lebœuf as an organizer and strategist, I think he is utterly wrong. Correspondents could do harm if they were allowed to telegraph what they chose, but this is easily prevented. The real reason that generals object to writers in their camp is because they dislike and resent criticism. To a class—only a class—of military men, criticism from beings who are not at least a grade above them is not merely distasteful—it is unendurable. Still General Lebœuf ought to be above that feeling. His view might be unobjectionable if the sympathies of a nation did not follow its Press. The first Napoleon said that the army should be one with the nation, the nation one with the army. Under the modern conditions of society, the French Press can alone effect that in France; while the same country may bid good-bye to the sympathies of England if she excludes, while Prussia (as I believe) encourages, writers. I forgot to say that M. Ollivier hinted—I don't think he said—that a victory would determine exterior sympathies; a remark with a great deal of truth, but which does not comprise the whole question. Another point in M. Ollivier's conversation struck me. He incidentally said the Chassepôt must now resolve the question; but he did not seem to take any interest in the technical details of the subject. There M. Ollivier was right; probably he relied on this all-important fact being the opinion of others;

but I have personally no doubt that the Chassepôt will do a great deal for the French. As far as breech action is concerned, the Chassepôt is only a trifle better than the original needle-gun; it is a shade quicker in loading, and has a shade less "crachement," or spitting, than the needle-gun, and so disturbs less the aim of its firer; but in the barrel, it is all Lombard Street to a China orange on the Chassepôt. The needle-gun has a barrel designed long before 1860. The French barrel was blocked out with all the superior science of 1866. The needle-gun has a poor trajectory at anything like a decent range (500 yards), and wounds rather than kills; the Chassepôt bullet, driven by a huge relative charge of powder, has a magnificently flat trajectory, and, flattening out, makes a terrible hole. There are certainly some improved needle-guns; but an arm must be re-designed, not patched, to secure victory. With regard to British arms, the Chassepôt has an inferior breech action, but an infinitely better barrel than the Snider; while it is in all respects below the Henry-Martini, of which we have only 200, and these hand-made. The Emperor has just driven by the Rue de Rivoli, amidst loud cheers.

As a brilliant initiative had always been numbered among the military traditions of France, and as, moreover, the positions assigned to the French Army Corps pointed unmistakably to an invasion of Germany, surprise was expressed, as days, and even weeks, passed on, that the French Emperor did not avail himself of the early preparation of his army to strike a blow at Germany before her sovereigns had time to collect their forces. We know now that such had been the Emperor's intention. In a publication which has appeared under his sanction, and which he is understood to have dictated,* he has given an account of his military plan. The Emperor states that he knew that Prussia was ready to call out, in a short time, 900,000 men, and, with the aid of the Southern States of Germany, could count upon 1,100,000 soldiers. France was only able to muster 600,000; and, as the number of fighting men is never more than one-half the actual effective force, Germany was in a position to bring into the field 550,000 men, whilst France had only about 300,000 to confront the enemy. To compensate for this numerical inferiority, it was necessary for the Emperor, by a rapid movement, to cross the Rhine, separate Southern Germany from the North German Confederation, and, by the *éclat* of a first success, secure the alliance of Austria and Italy. If he were able to prevent the armies of Southern Germany from forming their junction with

* "Campagne de 1870 : des Causes qui ont amené la Capitulation de Sedan. Par un Officier attaché à l'Etat Major-Général. Bruxelles."

those of the north, the effective strength of the Prussians would be reduced by 200,000 men; and the disproportion between the number of combatants thus much diminished. If Austria and Italy made common cause with France, then the superiority of numbers would be in her favour. The Emperor's plan of campaign—which he confided, at Paris, to Marshals MacMahon and Lebœuf alone—was to mass 150,000 men at Metz, 100,000 at Strasburg, and 50,000 at the Camp of Châlons. The concentration of the first two armies, one on the Saar and the other on the Rhine, did not reveal his projects; for the enemy was left in uncertainty as to whether the attack would be made against the Rhenish Provinces or upon the Duchy of Baden. As soon as the troops should have been concentrated at the points indicated, it was the Emperor's purpose to immediately unite the two armies of Metz and Strasburg; and, at the head of 250,000 men, to cross the Rhine at Maxau, leaving at his right the fortress of Rastadt, and, at his left, that of Germerheim. Reaching the other side of the Rhine, he would have forced the States of the South to observe neutrality, and would then have hurried on to encounter the Prussians. Whilst this movement was in course of execution, the 50,000 men at Châlons, under the command of Marshal Canrobert, were to proceed to Metz, to protect the rear of the army and guard the north-eastern frontier. At the same time the French fleet cruising in the Baltic would have held stationary, in the north of Prussia, a part of the enemy's forces, obliged to defend the coasts threatened with invasion.

We shall soon see why this scheme could not be executed, important as it was that Napoleon should assume the offensive. It was on the 28th of July, nearly a fortnight after the declaration of war, that the Emperor reached his head-quarters at Metz. But, even then, for a week nothing was heard of him. During that week the German hosts had been mustering from the extremities of the Fatherland. The twelve Army Corps of the North German Confederation, with the Prussian Guard Corps d'Armée, the Bavarian Field Army, and the Würtemberg and Baden Divisions, were formed into three armies, and placed under the command of General Von Steinmetz, Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, and his cousin, the Crown Prince. The largest of these armies, that of Prince Frederick Charles, assembled at Mayence. The corps of Steinmetz united about Treves, and the Crown Prince's army, which included the South German troops, met near Landau. This disposition—made in such perfect secrecy that, as the Emperor pathetically complains in the work to which we have referred, the French never could tell where the enemy was—was planned in order that if the Emperor should

advance from Metz through the Vosges, he should be confronted at or before Mayence by the army of Prince Frederick Charles, nearly equal to his own in strength. But the Emperor's movements were still delayed. Some observers said that he hesitated, others that he had no plan. He himself has declared that at this time the forces on which he had counted were not forthcoming. With reference to this particular period he has written:—

The army of Metz, instead of 150,000 men, only mustered 100,000; that of Strasburg only 40,000, instead of 100,000; whilst the corps of Marshal Canrobert had still one division at Paris and another at Soissons; his artillery, as well as his cavalry, was not ready. Further, no army corps was even yet completely furnished with the equipments necessary for taking the field. The Emperor gave precise orders to the effect that the arrival of the missing regiments should be hastened; but he was obeyed slowly, excuse being made that it was impossible to leave Algeria, Paris, and Lyons without garrisons.

Such were some of the causes of the Emperor's inaction. But they were not, they could not be, known in Paris. There it was firmly believed that at any moment the armies of the Empire, at a word from their chief, might descend like an avalanche on Germany, and impatience was expressed because that word remained unspoken. To give a temporary satisfaction to this feeling, the Emperor, knowing the deficiencies of his own army, and, as he has since admitted, in complete ignorance of the positions of his enemy, determined upon a movement which for an instant seemed to announce the opening of the campaign. By the beginning of August the Imperial Guard had joined Bazaine at Metz; Canrobert had moved from Châlons to Nancy; and MacMahon's corps was advancing from Strasburg to the Lauter. The military leaders of Germany had exerted themselves to the utmost to be able to oppose the advance of the French, and were aided by a military and patriotic enthusiasm which veterans and the students of history could liken to nothing but that which glowed during the War of Liberation. Every day saw enormous accessions to the armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General Von Steinmetz; and although, when the French at length stirred themselves, there still remained some corps whose numbers were not complete, the great German army united under the King of Prussia was officially declared to be ready for war.

On the 2nd of August the Emperor left Metz by railway for Forbach, taking with him the Prince Imperial. His Majesty has since stated that the business of the day was to ascertain the numbers and position of the enemy. From Forbach the Emperor proceeded at once in the direction of Saarbruck, a Prussian

frontier town, occupied by a small advanced guard. A French division, under General Bataille, carried the heights of Speichern, on the right of Saarbruck, without difficulty; and the Prussians, after a resistance which had no military object, withdrew to their next line of defence. The affair lasted only from 11 in the forenoon until 2 P.M., and after it the Emperor returned to Metz to dinner. But as the battle had been fought for political reasons, care was taken to give it importance. No battle could be insignificant at which the Emperor had been present, and the despatches transmitted to Paris announced therein a victory with two interesting features. The mitrailleuse gun, from which so much was expected, had been tried, and the Prince Imperial had received his "baptism of fire." Ten mitrailleuses were in battery, and at each discharge, it was said, the enemy's battalions were mowed down. The French newspapers declared that the moral effect of this victory must be immense. It appeared, however, that some of their own correspondents, venturing into Saarbruck on the very afternoon of the day when the French were supposed to have taken the place, were arrested by the pickets of the Prussians, who had returned, after an absence of two hours; that the railway, which it was supposed the French had wished to occupy, or at least to cut, was entire; and that the forest behind Saarbruck was alive with Prussian troops. Greater events were soon to make the world indifferent to the incidents of this smallest of *promenades militaires*.

CHAPTER II.

THE demonstration at Saarbruck had led to nothing. If it was intended as an advance, no ground had been occupied; if it was a reconnaissance, nothing had been ascertained. Two days afterwards, the Emperor's trusted counsellor, Marshal MacMahon, was at Metz, attending a council of war. On that day the first serious blow of the campaign fell upon one of his divisions, which he had left near Weissenburg, a town on the Lauter, exactly at the frontier, with crushing effect. This division, commanded by General Abel Douay, had been left to guard the opening between the Vosges and the Rhine, whilst the other division of MacMahon's Corps advanced northward, to approach De Faily. On the 3rd of August, the Crown Prince of Prussia was approaching the frontier with a force of more than 120,000 men; but although Douay had some suspicion of his movement, and had sent out patrols which fell in with the Bavarian cavalry, he was taken by surprise. He had pitched his camp within two miles of a frontier which was covered with woods, which con-

ceased the movements of his powerful enemy, and in this dangerous position he seems to have dispensed with guards. The Prince advanced with four divisions—about 40,000 men—against Douay, whose troops were cooking their morning meal when the German army appeared on the heights above Schweigen, and the enemy's shells began to fall into their camp. The French rushed to arms with all their old ardour: line regiments vied with *corps d'élite*, and the Turcos fought like lions. But nothing could prevail against the steady determination of the Germans, fighting with the advantage of immensely superior numbers and against unprepared troops. The French, completely overpowered, lost their commander, who was killed by a shell; and when the Germans had stormed the Geisberg, the whole French line broke in confusion, leaving tents, weapons, and baggage in the hands of the victor. A correspondent of the *Daily News*, who was with the French army, transmitted the following brief account of the action:—

Whilst General Douay's division, composed of the 74th and 59th Regiments of the Line, the 16th Battalion of Chasseurs on foot, one regiment of Turcos, and a regiment of mounted Chasseurs, were encamped in the neighbourhood of Weissenburg, they were startled by a tremendous discharge of artillery. As the patrols, which had been posted all along the line of the frontier, had not signalled the presence of any Prussian troops, the men believed for a moment that they were surrounded by the enemy. This was not the case; but the Prussians, in great force and well supplied with artillery, appeared on the heights of Schweigen, occupying the whole of the country near the small Bavarian village. General Douay ordered his troops to advance before the enemy, keeping as much as possible behind Weissenburg, which lay just between them and the Prussian forces. But this precaution proved quite useless, for the guns were pouring a tremendous fire upon them, and the troops were falling in great numbers in the village of Weissenburg itself. The French retired from their former position, and commenced marching on the right side of the village. The Prussian guns were firing at a tremendous rate, and three rounds fell partly in the town and partly among the troops. Several of the houses were set on fire, and a good number of soldiers lay dead or wounded. At about eleven o'clock General Voscan's division began to retire. However, a new attack was ordered. The Turcos led the way, and, bayonet in hand, threw themselves on one of the Prussian batteries of artillery. All proved useless. Had the French insisted on attacking the enemy any longer, there

would not have been one of them left alive on the ground.

As soon as what was left of General Douay's forces began retiring, the Prussian artillery pursued them. About twelve o'clock General Douay himself fell a victim to the Prussian artillery. The French troops commenced running without order, crossing roads and vineyards until they reached the farthest part of Weissenburg. The number of dead and wounded must have been very large indeed. The remaining troops are eager to revenge the death of their general. The country people seem to be in great consternation. The roads which lead to Hagenau are covered with peasants carrying their goods and cattle with them, and lamenting over the sad fate reserved for their humble cottages.

It was here that the French first became aware of the efficiency of the new Prussian artillery, which, since the Bohemian campaign, had been very greatly improved in force and weight of fire. On the night of the 4th, the streets of Hagenau presented the strange spectacle—so often to be renewed in this war—of throngs of fugitive soldiers, excited and clamorous, explaining their defeat to astonished civilians, easy to be persuaded that only some extraordinary failure or reversal of the very course of nature could have brought about the retreat of a French army. The Crown Prince had fought this action before his two cavalry divisions had come up, or his troops would have taken more than 600 prisoners and one gun; and the flight of the French was so rapid that subsequent attempts at pursuit were made in vain. It could not be pretended that this combat afforded any measure of the military value of the two armies, but it deeply impressed the mind both of France and Europe. The Crown Prince's sudden movement exhibited German rapidity and decision in contrast with French vacillation and delay; it betokened on the part of the Germans a purpose and a plan, and gave them the prestige of a victory on the territory of the Power which had challenged them to war. The Parisians began to doubt the wisdom that presided over the conduct of the campaign; but their confidence in the army was rather raised than weakened by the reports of heroic feats performed by individuals and separate corps, and they firmly believed that Weissenburg would be terribly revenged. Marshal MacMahon, who had heard at Metz of the disaster which had befallen Douay's corps, hastened to join his remaining divisions, stationed beyond Hagenau, and arrest the movement of his vigorous enemy. He had three divisions of his own Army Corps intact—besides a division which Felix Douay had sent from Belfort, and a cuirassier brigade of Canrobert's corps, and the remains of the divisions which had

been defeated at Weissenburg. With these troops—in all about 50,000 men—he occupied, on the 5th, a strong defensive position on the slopes of the Vosges, his object being to cover the chief lines of communication between the eastern and western sides of that mountain range and the line of railway from Strasburg to Bitsche. His left rested on Reichshofen, his centre was on the eminences between Froschweiler and Wörth, and his right extended to beyond Elsasshausen. His front was semicircular, presenting a convex line to the enemy, and his position, owing to the difficult ground on all sides, was one very strong for defence. A force attempting to pass him here by the road to Hagenau, would have exposed its flank to attack, while the road through the Vosges could only be gained after he had been dislodged. The Crown Prince arrived from Weissenburg on the evening of the 5th, with an army of 130,000 men, and found MacMahon waiting for him on the heights. At seven on the morning of the 6th the battle began. It is alleged by various authorities that the Prince had not intended to attack so soon; that the action was brought on by the uncontrollable eagerness of the outposts, and that this is one explanation of certain unsteady and irregular movements which marred its earlier plans.

The battle was brought on by the outpost firing in front of Wörth before the Crown Prince's army had completed its intended change of front; and as the French directed their fire against Wörth, the artillery of the Prussian 5th Corps was stationed on the heights east of that place. A misunderstanding of an order given to Hartmann's 2nd Bavarian Corps led to their withdrawal, and Marshal MacMahon then threw himself with great vigour on the 5th Prussian Corps. It was then that the great struggle of the day took place. For two hours the two armies fought as if the issue of the campaign depended on their valour, but the arrival of the 11th Prussian Corps compelled the French to fall back on their centre and resume the defensive. The losses on each side were enormous, the strength of the French position counterbalancing to a great extent the superior numbers of the Germans, and at one time the issue seemed doubtful. The Crown Prince describes the resistance of the enemy as "most obstinate and intense." By two o'clock the combat had extended along the centre line. At this time orders were given to the Würtemberg division to turn Reichshofen, and threaten to cut off MacMahon's line of retreat, while a Bavarian corps was sent to turn the French right. These movements succeeded: both at Elsasshausen and at Reichshofen the French saw themselves outflanked by powerful corps. Within an hour the French line was broken, and the right centre and left were thrown into disorder. At this crisis of the battle Marshal Mac-

Mahon attempted to redeem the fortunes of the day by a grand charge of the brigade of Cuirassiers which he had borrowed from Canrobert's corps. Its advance was an extraordinary and splendid spectacle; but it was made against the artillery of the 5th and 11th Prussian Corps, and ended in a grand catastrophe, horses and men rolling together by hundreds in the dust. The Prussian cavalry had not yet joined, but on the 7th the pursuit of the fugitives was continued by the Baden and Würtemberg brigades, and the Crown Prince reported officially that he had taken 5,000 unwounded prisoners, thirty guns, six mitrailleuses, and two eagles.

The Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* with the army of the Crown Prince wrote, on the 10th of August, from headquarters:—

The swift and skilful movement against Weissenburg, resulting in complete success to the German arms, was but a foretaste of the storm which threatened the northern part of Alsace. On the second day after Weissenburg came the battle of Wörth, and the Crown Prince gained a great victory over the ablest generals in France. It is admitted that the French fought with reckless courage, and that they inflicted heavy loss on their opponents, but the fact of this hard fighting and of this heavy loss shows how serious a defeat was sustained by MacMahon. I traversed the battle-field whilst the dead still lay unburied on the trampled ground, and could form a good notion of how the fight had gone by the ghastly evidence which remained. Wörth is at the bottom of a fertile valley between two ridges of cultivated ground. There is a quantity of woodland in the neighbourhood, and especially behind the French position, or on the western side of the valley, there is a strip of forest which forms a cover for retreating troops. The little River Bruder, not deep enough in summer-time to float a skiff, flows though the village, and a high road comes winding down towards it on the eastern side of the valley, flanked by trees. Here was the German position, stretching far to right and left. Along this road were heaps of spiked helmets to be seen, and cart-loads of needle-guns collected under the trees. At a distance the French musketry fire had told more heavily than the German, and I heard that the French artillery had been very well served. But though the burying parties were busy with the German dead on this eastern side of Wörth, there was more than an exchange of slaughterous work on the western side. Here the Prussians and Bavarians had pushed forward in strong force, and their fire had told fearfully upon the French. The high spirit and rigid discipline of the one army

had been more than a match for the desperate resistance of the other. Whole companies of Frenchmen had been mowed down in their wild attempts to check the enemy's advance. It had been a tolerably equal fight in some places, for the ground was strewn with German dead. But more and more Frenchmen had fallen in proportion. Black Turcos and wide-trousered Zouaves lay thick at many points, and the Cuirassiers had suffered much. There were steel breast-plates and brass helmets scattered thickly on the line of the retreat, whilst the dead horses in all directions might be counted by hundreds. And so, westward through the wood, went the traces of increasing disaster: officers and men lying grimly where they had fallen, some of them in quiet, shady spots, as though they were pick-nickers asleep; pools of blood where the wounded had been found; knapsacks, rifles, and overcoats, either thrown away in flight or left by the wounded on the field. Then came a spot where the French had rallied, and where the dead of both sides lay thick. Turcos might be seen who had evidently fought to the last, and had tried to fire their pieces as they lay. Frenchmen of the line regiments had here and there fallen in numbers, as though they had halted and faced about in regular order. But the aspect of the fields beyond the wood seemed to indicate a hasty retreat. Waggons were overturned, baggage was thrown out upon the roadside, and many knapsacks were to be seen. No one who had passed over that battle-ground of Wörth when I did could have failed to realize that a great disaster had befallen the French arms, though, at a time when most of the wounded had been removed, and on so large a scene of action, it would have been impossible to judge of the exact loss sustained. However, I see no reason to doubt the official return on the German side, which gives about 10,000 Frenchmen and 7,000 Germans *hors de combat*, and about 7,000 prisoners taken by the victors—4,000 in the battle, and 3,000 more in the pursuit. These losses, with the further loss of cannon and colours, made Wörth an evil day for France. Well might the wounded Germans raise themselves to cheer the Crown Prince as he passed, and cry that Germany was safe. It will often be told how the armies met on the 6th of August, and how MacMahon made his unsuccessful effort to repel the invasion of Alsace, how the Prussians held the left of the line, the Bavarians and Württembergers the right, and how a few Baden troops, held in reserve by the Crown Prince, were brought up just in time to share the honours of the day. There was a fierce attack on both sides, it being difficult to say which party began, and gradually, as the German troops pressed round upon their opponents' line of retreat, the French were forced

to make so hasty a retrograde movement that the retreat became very nearly a rout. The Crown Prince handled his army so as to make the most of the deadly fire of his infantry. The cavalry was not used for an attack in the first instance, but was sent in pursuit when the enemy began his retreat. It was a victory due to the patriotic ardour of the German troops, as much as to anything in their discipline or tactics; but we must not forget that the French showed ardour likewise, and that the scale was turned for the Germans at Wörth by their intelligent understanding of the breech-loader drill, and by their steadiness in firing. These matters take time to learn, and I hope that our volunteers will have a chance of learning them before they are called upon to face a foe who may have learnt the new weapon at his leisure. We see the glorious results which Germany is reaping from her careful preparation.

The prisoners were assembled near the first station of the re-opened railway through Weissenburg. I could see many Turcos and Zouaves among them, though the greater part were soldiers of the Line. We drove past them very slowly, for the road was blocked with ammunition waggons, and I noticed that they seemed woefully discouraged. There were no songs and no laughter to be heard among them, and the few that were occupying themselves with picking fruit on trees that they had climbed had not a very lively air, for Frenchmen in such a position as fruit-picking. Then came the convoys of wounded moving to the rear. Suffering had made them brothers in misfortune. The mingled Germans and Frenchmen, with such opposite ideas about the Rhine in their heads all the while, sat or lay quietly side by side, as if they were old comrades. The only enemy, and the common enemy too, was the jolting waggon. As we neared Wörth there was a constant stream of waggons bringing down wounded men. Prussians and Bavarians, Turcos and Frenchmen, bore the agony of the road with equal silence. It was rare to hear a cry, though the poor fellows' faces showed much pain. They were sadder to see in their blood-stained bandages, with suffering still about them, than the men who lay grimly on the hill-sides. Wörth itself was a mere hospital, and all the inhabitants were either nursing the wounded or burying the dead. It was an evil fate for the picturesque little place that more than a hundred thousand men on one side and the other should have settled their quarrel so near at hand.

Of coming movements I must say not a word. The event of yesterday was the capture by Würtemberg troops of the little fortress of Leuchtenberg, where a large amount of military

stores is reported to have been found. The assailants fired heavily into the place, and we heard their guns booming all yesterday forenoon.

Two days afterwards the same Correspondent wrote:—

The more we gather of the details of the battle of Wörth, the more clearly does it appear that there was no miracle about the affair, no sudden surprise to military critics—as though a new weapon had been discovered. From the villages in rear of the field I gather far more of the French movements than could be learned from the prisoners or the villagers upon the field itself. It would seem that the Imperial commanders in this quarter were altogether outmanœuvred by the Crown Prince; and that, whatever the merits of the respective small-arm fire, there was no comparing the tactics of the two armies. The French allowed themselves to be so placed as to have required no common degree of fighting to save them. First, we hear of their blind confidence, and of their cries of “À Berlin!” whilst they were really in desperate danger. Then came the news of the surprise at Weissenburg and of the death of General Douay. He was posted in a corner of the French territory with masses of German troops collected on both his flanks, and was much farther from his supports than prudence warranted in face of such an enemy. It can never be known whether the French commander would have extricated his men with less loss than they actually sustained, had he lived to direct them, for he fell by one of the first discharges of artillery. Thus was a step gained by the Germans. They had gallantly stormed the position at Weissenburg, and had begun to shatter the enemy in detail. MacMahon and De Failly were now called on to act. The former marched against the Crown Prince with his whole *corps d’armée*, and expected De Failly to support his left in case of a check. Here again was displayed the impetuous over-confidence which Frenchmen are apt to show. The second opportunity of beating them in detail was given to the Germans, and a bloody battle was the result. The Prussians and Bavarians together far out-numbered the corps of MacMahon, and before the French Marshal had been long engaged he was sending aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp to beg help from De Failly. The distance was not great to Bitsche, and the message must have arrived in time to bring the needed help, if only everything had been ready. But here again over-confidence had prevailed. One French corps was destroyed before the other came to its support. People who saw it tell with wonder of the rush of MacMahon’s beaten army westward, and the advance of angry and almost incredulous troops coming to their aid, towards the front. It was too



late to renew the battle, too late to save the fine regiments which lay strewn over the fields at Wörth. The more desperate the resistance, the greater had been the slaughter, until at last there had been a sort of panic. Frenchmen seldom retreat in good order after a defeat. The fugitives from Wörth were in great disorder as they passed through villages more than ten miles in the rear. The corps of De Failly could only have sacrificed itself uselessly when once MacMahon's soldiers had been demoralized, and to have fought a second battle of Wörth would have been to play into the hands of the Crown Prince, who would like nothing better than to engage the whole French army in detail, and beat them by degrees. We must remember that he is the better general who has the larger force present in the nick of time.

The battle of Wörth was well fought during the early part of the day, both by MacMahon and by the soldiers, but defeat seems to have quite demoralized the troops, who now began to manifest a spirit which has since been frequently displayed in their ranks. On the evening of the 6th they fled from Wörth as madly as if they had been the rawest levies, although they were feebly pursued, the Crown Prince apparently not being aware of the greatness of the advantage he had won. About 3,000 of them took refuge in Strasburg, where their arrival spread dismay. At Saverne, M. Edmond About met them,—“a long procession of laggards—Cuirassiers without cuirasses, fusiliers without guns, horsemen on foot, and infantry on horseback. A real charge of retreating Cuirassiers, galloping like mad, upset my horse in the ditch and broke the springs of the carriage.” The roads in all directions were strewn with arms and knapsacks. The officers had lost their authority, or rather the trial was revealing to them how little they had ever had. The Army of the Empire was betraying defects which had been predicted by military observers, but which not the less, on their manifestation, filled intelligent Frenchmen with astonishment and alarm. But this battle, which the Germans name after the village of Wörth, and the French variously, after those of Reichshofen and Fröschweiler, was not the only catastrophe of the day.

The news of the disaster of Weissenburg, reaching Metz on the 5th, induced the Emperor to give orders to General Frossard, commanding the Second Army Corps, to withdraw the troops which had occupied the heights above Saarbruck on the 2nd. There are woods behind Saarbruck as dense as those behind Weissenburg, and on the night of the 5th Frossard's corps lay in the valley which extends from Saarbruck to Forbach. But the caution which removed the Second Corps only a mile or two

THE BATTLES OF SAARBRÜCKEN AND SPEICHERN

2nd and 6th of August 1870.



from the enemy did not induce the Emperor to send up the Third or Fourth Corps to its support. On the morning of the 6th, the leading division of General Steinmetz's army arrived at Saarbruck under General Von Kamecke, and began to reconnoitre. The weakness of this corps induced General Frossard to order the occupation of the heights of Speichern, from which the French fired on the advancing Germans. These heights, rising in almost perpendicular ascent several hundred feet above the valley, form a natural fortress. The hills project into the valley like so many bastions, affording one of the strongest imaginable positions for defence. The action began in earnest about noon, with the arrival of the Prussian 14th Division of General Von Göben's corps. The French occupied the heights of Speichern with their entire force, and during the action a division from Bazaine's corps came to their support.

The Prussians were greatly outnumbered, but Von Kamecke, knowing that other corps were coming up, did not hesitate to engage the enemy. He attacked in front, and also attempted to turn the left flank of the French by Styring, but was uniformly repulsed. By three o'clock all the troops of his division were under fire, and his enterprise assumed a very serious aspect. But other German troops, attracted by the firing, now arrived. At first, two batteries from Von Barnekow's division came up at a gallop, followed speedily by the infantry and cavalry. The 5th Division, under General Stülpnagel, belonging to Prince Frederick Charles's army, had also heard the firing at Sulzbach, and marched, guided only by the sound of the cannon. With these forces General Von Göben, who had now assumed the command, directed a vigorous attack against the French front, especially against the wooded portion of the declivity. The charge was successful: the wood was occupied. On the southern skirts of the wood the French made a stand, and with infantry, cavalry, and artillery, endeavoured to retrieve the fortunes of the day. But the Prussian infantry were immovable. At this juncture the artillery of the 5th Prussian Division rendered good service, and performed a rare feat. Two batteries literally clambered up the hills of Speichern, by a narrow and precipitous mountain-path, and took part in repulsing the enemy. Frossard then attempted a flank attack against the Prussian left; but in vain. A final charge, the third since the Prussians entered the wood, was now made by the French with great impetuosity; but the Prussians stood firm, and General Frossard, seeing that nothing was to be gained, ordered a retreat. It was a sanguinary action—glorious for the Germans. Fifty-two French battalions, with the artillery of an entire corps, stationed in an almost unassailable position, had been defeated by twenty-seven Prussian batta-

lions, supported by the artillery of one division. Before this action it might have been said that the Prussians had only fought when they had the numerical advantage: the battle of Forbach showed that they had a confidence in their ability to engage superior numbers with success, and that that confidence was justified. The battle of Wörth was fought according to a preconcerted plan: this of Forbach appears not to have been appointed, but to have been the result of Von Göben's resolution to seize an offered opportunity. Not only did it raise the reputation of the Prussian infantry and artillery—the ground was too difficult for cavalry to take any part in the action—but it disclosed the high tactical capacity of the German commanders, who, in quick and comprehensive insight, and power over all the resources and instrumentalities of war, showed themselves greatly superior to the men whom the Emperor had placed at the head of his Army Corps.

The retreat of the French from Forbach became a signal rout. Baggage, guns, caissons, camp equipage, all were abandoned in the flight. A Prussian division had occupied Forbach, and thus forcing General Frossard off the direct road to Metz, compelled him to withdraw to the south-west and leave the road to St. Avold open to the enemy. At the close of the day Steinmetz came up, but neither he nor the subordinate Generals were aware of the real extent of their success, or prepared to follow it up. The road taken by the French in their flight was blocked by numerous waggons with provisions and clothing, and the woods were filled with stragglers, wandering about in a purposeless way. Among the spoils of the day were several railway vans full of confectionery, and ten days afterwards it was easier to obtain a hundredweight of sweetmeats at Forbach than a loaf of ordinary bread. So, after the battle of Wörth, along with the plan of the campaign, a number of ladies' wardrobes had become the prize of the victor.

Between the armies routed at Wörth and Forbach had lain the Fifth Corps, that of De Failly. As we have seen, a division of this corps arrived at Niederbron on the afternoon of the 6th, just in time to cover the retreat of MacMahon's broken battalions upon Saverne. De Failly, however, perceived that the defeats on both sides of him had made his position untenable, and his corps, retreating southwards with the greatest precipitation, was lost to view for ten of the most critical days of the campaign. M. Edmond About described at the time the effect of its sudden appearance at Saverne on Sunday, the day after the battles of Wörth and Forbach:—"A false alarm was raised, the Duc de Magenta had the *générale* beat, and Saverne believed itself lost. The Fifth Corps had arrived. While the officers

and soldiers threw themselves on the road to Phalsburg, three-quarters of the inhabitants utterly lost themselves, and rushed into the neighbouring woods. The example—a sad example—was given them by the gendarmes and the sergents de ville. They shut the shops, threw their furniture into the gutters; many of the farmers drove their beasts before them as in the time of Abraham.”

CHAPTER III.

MONDAY, August 8th, will long be remembered by this generation. On the morning of that day the public of Europe and America were peremptorily summoned to surrender that belief in the essential military superiority of France which had become almost a part of its mental constitution. The news from Saarbrück and Berlin was surprising—that from Metz was almost stupefying. King William and the Crown Prince boasted of thousands of prisoners taken, and eagles, cannon, mitrailleuses, and camp equipage captured; but these did not half so much impress the public mind as the apologetic and plaintive messages transmitted from Metz to Paris by the Emperor. Napoleon knew better than the enemy the extent of the French disasters, and his despatches, of which he telegraphed no fewer than five on the morning of Sunday, the 7th, were solemn as a knell. The fourth of the series ended,—“The retreat is being effected in good order. All may be regained (*tout peut se rétablir*).—NAPOLEON.” In the fifth despatch the Emperor said,—“In order to sustain us here, it is necessary that Paris and France should consent to make great efforts of patriotism. The trial is a serious one.” The Council of Ministers at Paris issued a proclamation, in which they said, “The situation is not compromised, but the enemy is on our territory, and a serious effort is necessary.” On receipt of the first telegram at Paris a Ministerial Council was summoned, and the Empress presided over its deliberations at five o’clock in the morning. On the day before, Saturday the 6th—the day of Wörth and Forbach—the Parisians, exasperated at the news of the misfortune at Weissenburg, had been suddenly startled by a false report of a great French victory. MacMahon, it was alleged, had retaken Weissenburg, captured sixty guns, and made 25,000 prisoners. Among the latter, it was said, was the Crown Prince, who, when brought before the Emperor, had shot himself. For an hour and a half the frenzy of joy was uncontrollable. Flags appeared at every window, opera favourites appeared and sang the Marseillaise in the streets.

When the falsehood of the rumour became known, the populace gave way to excesses. Such was the preparation of the Parisians for a knowledge of the disastrous events which were at that very time taking place on the Sauer and the Saar.

At Metz the excitement of the heterogeneous multitude which had been collected there, was extreme. A Special Correspondent of the *Daily News*, who arrived there in the midst of it, wrote on the 7th of August:—

I reached Metz this morning at six o'clock from Nancy. On my alighting at the Hotel de l'Europe I immediately perceived that something was going wrong. The scene at the hotel presented a most exciting aspect. The waggons of the États-Majors, which for several days had been filling up the whole courtyard, were being got ready for leaving. The officers were packing up their things in great haste. Some of them seemed very busy giving orders; others were taking breakfast in the table-d'hôte room; others, again, seemed ready for starting, and were discussing with great passion the issue of late events. Though I was about the only bourgeois there, and saw that the officers looked at me in a very suspicious sort of way, I did not stir from my place. I had not been sitting down an hour at the café before the hotel, when up came a veterinary officer whom I had known not long ago, and whom I knew to belong to General Ladmirault's corps. The news he gave me was sufficient to justify the terror and panic one read in everybody's face. A fierce battle had been going on ever since Thursday. The rest of the army was completely *en déroute*, and notwithstanding the valour shown by the troops, it seemed impossible to arrest the progress of the Prussians. The 76th and 77th Regiments of the Line had kept for four hours their position against something like fifty thousand men. One regiment of Chasseurs and another of Cuirassiers had been completely destroyed. One battalion of the 40th, a thousand strong, had retired with 105 men. Of the three other battalions, it was with the greatest difficulty that two could be formed with only one officer per company. As to the feeling in the whole army against General MacMahon and the leading officers, it is something tremendous. What was your plan? they keep asking. Why weaken our forces by occupying such a long line when the enemy was only a few miles distant, and it would be impossible for us to concentrate at a given point when the enemy might be upon us at any moment? Why march against Saarbruck when the whole army was not yet in a position to engage in separate battles? Not half of the African corps had arrived. Thousands of men had not yet joined their regiments, and as to speaking

of the commissariat department, it has proved truly inefficient.

It is not a question of time—it is a question of military organization. The Prussian system is so easy and so simple, that an army, however numerous it may be, is sure to meet with no such inconveniences as have been experienced on this occasion by the French. What moral influence can a general such as MacMahon have on his army, when the men, even the most uninstructed, see with their own eyes the mismanagement of the whole undertaking? What can men think of their generals, and with what heart can they combat to invade a hostile country, when food and straw and hay, and all that is requisite for an army, is wanting them in their own country?

How is it possible that the general officers immediately under the commanders of this miserable war can execute with zeal and with punctuality the orders they receive, when a general like MacMahon is heard to say, after having fought for so many hours, that he must stop because they have no more ammunition? The fact is, that the *morale* of the whole army has greatly suffered. When on the field of battle, soldiers will never lament much at seeing a regiment returning from the fight reduced to a half or a quarter of its number, as long as they are assured that some good has come out of it. But when they perceive that valour and *élan* are useless before an enemy who only acts according to strict strategy, they lose their spirits. The people at Metz are in a most excited state of mind. They have not one man in the town, and the Prussians are reported to have occupied St. Avold, which is only about fifteen miles from here. The Prussians have now the line to Forbach, and have taken possession of it. Some friends of mine were at the railway station all night yesterday, waiting to see the arrival of the wounded, but not one appeared. Where are they? In whose hands? Some of the officers who have made their way back here, say they lost all their baggage.

While I was writing I heard a great row going on in the courtyard. I went down and saw that the guards at the gate had been ordered off. The servants were putting the officers' baggage in the waggons, and they all seemed to be in a great hurry. I am told that the Emperor intends removing his headquarters, perhaps to Nancy, as the Prussians appear to be directing themselves towards that town. . . . Great excitement prevails. The Emperor's carriage and horses are being brought to the railway station.

On the evening of the same day, the same Correspondent wrote:—

Newspaper correspondents seem to be feared more than the Prussians themselves. I closed my letter this morning saying that I intended going to the railway station, and perhaps seeing the Emperor off. As I left the hotel I met Mr. Simpson, of the *Illustrated London News*, and Mr. Mayhew and his son (of the *Globe*), who, like myself, were going to the railway station. As we walked along and saw the Emperor's carriages and baggage being put on waggons, we began talking about the war and the latest news that had arrived. Mr. Simpson said he thought the scene before us so picturesque that he would take a sketch of it. Accordingly he drew his note-book out of his pocket, and began sketching one of the Emperor's carriages. We saw a lot of soldiers surrounding us, but took no notice of them. A few minutes afterwards, an artillery officer in white trousers and blue jacket came up to us, and looking very hard, said:—"One of these gentlemen was sketching something. May I see what it was?" Mr. Simpson took the book out of his pocket, and showed it to him. The officer examined it, he looked round, and in a moment we found ourselves surrounded by some fifty artillerymen. "À la place," cried the officer, upon which the soldiers took hold of us, and informed us that we were their prisoners. "What for?" asked I. "Ah! le vilain espion Prussien, vous verrez," was the satisfactory answer I got. The officer was leading the way, and to have seen him walking so proudly before us, one would have thought that, instead of having got hold of us, he had taken one of the enemy's batteries. On our entering the town, a great crowd began to assemble. People came running from every side street, and the crowd swelled to such an extent that before we reached the Cathedral Square it had grown to something like three thousand persons. It was with the greatest difficulty the soldiers could defend us from being torn to pieces. "Kill them!" cried every one, "the rascally spies; justice, justice!" I am sure that if we had had to walk another five minutes, not one of us would have been saved. However, thank God, we reached the *place*, and were thrown, all safe, into the guard-room—a room measuring ten square feet. The officer who was in charge of the place ordered a picket of men to be placed before the door to prevent the crowd breaking in, but all the precautions taken did not prevent two or three men in blouses rushing in and insulting us most grossly. There was no help for it; we were spies, and deserved to be punished accordingly. We waited for a short time, and then in came a colonel with several other officers. Not one of them addressed us in French, but in German, and our not answering in German was sufficient to prove that we

were Prussians, and pretended not to be so. We answered all the questions addressed to us, showed our passports, but nothing seemed to satisfy them. Mr. Simpson's note-book was evidently a most aggravating circumstance. The carriage was not a carriage; it was a plan of the fortress of Metz. We waited very patiently for an hour or so, asked the men on guard if they would allow us to send a note to General St. Sauveur; but they would allow nothing of the kind. The door was flung open, and in came a gentleman with a red ribbon on his coat, and looking as white as a ghost. One would have said he had gone mad by the way he went on. He told the officer who had questioned us not to leave us on any account, as he had sufficient proofs in his hands to show that we were a set of spies. "That gentleman," said he, pointing to Mr. Mayhew, "came the other day to my office and bought three copies of the *Journal de la Moselle* (the speaker being the editor of that paper). Now, who on earth but a spy would come to a newspaper office and buy three—do you hear me—three copies of one paper?" The readers of the *Daily News* will understand that it was very difficult for us to know what to say in our defence when our passports and papers were not of the slightest use, and when the fact that one of us had bought three copies of one journal was a sufficient reason to shoot us for being spies. After many explanations we induced one of the officers to take a note to General St. Sauveur, explaining our situation to him, and asking him to say a word in our favour. We waited some time, and then the officer came back with an order from the general to liberate the English journalists. The editor of *Le Journal de la Moselle* began to apologise for his conduct towards us, saying that he had acted thus because the state of his country required every citizen to do his duty. As the crowd had been increasing before the house, and nobody could have persuaded them that we were not spies, the officer suggested we should remain locked up till late. However, after one hour had elapsed, and the people seeming to be more calm, we thought we might as well take the chance and go to the hotel. The editor and two other gentlemen left the guard-house with us, and proceeded to leave the place. But on our appearing in the street the people began shouting as loud as ever, and pushing the soldiers in order to get hold of us. I heard the editor shouting, "They are friends! They are friends!" but I don't know, I am sure, what happened after. I found myself again in the guard-room, together with Mr. Mayhew and his son, Mr. Simpson having escaped. We were talking amongst ourselves, of course in English, when a man in a blouse, and who, I know not why, had never left the

place, went up to the officer commanding, and said that he had been listening to our conversation, and that we had been speaking German all the time. This mysterious man, who was allowed to say anything he thought proper, and who never left us for a moment, notwithstanding that he was repeatedly ordered to do so by the general, was looking at us in a most ferocious way. On our asking whether there was another door by which we could have gone off without waiting there so long, we were informed that we could not go until General Coffinière, the general commanding in Metz, had seen us, and had given a special order. I must confess that we were beginning to get a little tired of it. General Coffinière, a tall, fine man, with white moustaches, finally arrived. The same story of questioning and cross-questioning began all over again. The Commissaire de Police, with another man, was introduced in order to examine the validity of our passports. On my showing the one I possessed, and which had been given me by Sir Augustus Paget only ten days before, on my leaving Florence, the Commissaire took it up, made a roll of it, and said it was a false one, and even if it were a good one it was worth nothing, for it did not prove that it was my own. The general sat himself on the small table, and knocking his stick on the wooden pavement, asked what had become of the sketching gentleman and his notebook. When he was told that Mr. Simpson had gone off, he went into a desperate passion, and swore at the colonel, saying that no orders, not even those of the Emperor himself, were to have been executed without his knowing of them; that he was responsible for the safety of Metz. He then looked at us in the face, and, addressing the officers, police agents, and men in blouses who surrounded him, said, "Gentlemen, you know that Metz is in a state of siege, and therefore no longer under the common law. We have been too humane, too noble-hearted, too generous. Whilst the Prussians have committed the most horrible crimes against inoffensive Frenchmen and other officers, we have suffered the enemy to abuse our generosity, and this is the gratitude we receive. But it must stop once for ever. It is a hard thing, but the law gives me the right to shoot any one I choose in the market square; and an example must be given, or we shall never have peace." "Bravo, General! bravo, Commander!" cried all of them in a chorus. The man in a blouse left the room, and in a second the whole square echoed with cries of "Bravo, le Général!" "Mort aux espions!" As I felt pretty safe that M. le Général would think twice before making his experiment on an English subject, I said frankly, that what he had been saying was all

nonsense, and that when we could prove who we were, and why we were in Metz, it was an absurd thing insisting any longer. "But your papers?" said the General; "have you nothing else but your passport?" I told him that my letters of introduction to the head-quarters had from some mysterious cause never reached me, and could only show some telegrams I had received, and the sight of which was sufficient to clear up everything. "Well," said the General, "I ought to ask you to give a satisfactory account of yourself within three hours; I shall give you four-and-twenty hours; but I must tell you one thing—if you succeed in getting off, you must leave this immediately, for we won't have people here amongst us who keep writing against France, and favouring the cause of Prussia. You say you are the correspondent of the *Daily News*, eh?"—"Yes, sir."—"All right. Good day, gentlemen," and off he went.

We had led the way, and now every moment a new spy was got hold of. One of them, the correspondent of the *Journal Illustré*, was in a very bad state indeed. His coat had been torn to pieces, and they had attempted to strangle him. The poor man was walking the street very peacefully, carrying a little dog with him, when a lot of people dashed upon him, and would have murdered him had it not been for several officers who did their best to save him. He cared little for himself, but he was in a most awful way about his dog, and offered any sum of money if they would bring it back to him. It was the most ludicrous thing in the world to hear the officers questioning him, and his answering only, "Oh! mon petit chien, mon petit chien!"

Another hour passed, when two officers of the Staff walked into the room and informed us that we were at liberty to go when we liked. One of them, the Vicomte de Valcourt, who spoke English very well, expressed his most sincere displeasure at what had taken place, and hoped we would understand that it was not owing to any bad feeling towards anybody, but only as a measure of precaution. The officer gave the necessary instructions to the sergeant who had charge of us that we might be set free, and left us on the most amicable terms. It was getting near six, and we decided on going. To our great surprise the man in the blouse stopped us, and said that we were not free to go, and could not leave until written orders had been given to the colonel. We were quite tired of it: we had been there nearly six hours, and certainly the place was anything but comfortable. But there was no help for it. Another half-hour elapsed, when at last a major of the Staff

came and took us to our hotel, leaving the people, who could make nothing of it, very much disappointed. We are all off to-night for Nancy.

One of the first measures which showed the world that the German commander-in-chief believed he had troops enough to pursue the Imperial army, and to spare, was the detachment of a Badish corps to lay siege to the great fortress of Strasburg. When, in the third week of August, General Urich, the commandant of Strasburg, was summoned to surrender, few persons believed that General Moltke really intended to detach an army for an enterprise so serious as the reduction of a first-class fortress. About 9,000 Mobile Guards, a regiment of the Line, and some sedentary National Guards, formed the garrison of the place on the 6th of August. On the evening of that day, however, several thousand fugitives from MacMahon's army fled thither, throwing the inhabitants into a complete panic. Thousands of the inhabitants left, rather than expose themselves to the horrors of a siege, but the vast majority remained to strengthen the hands of General Urich, and protract an obstinate resistance.

The Crown Prince of Prussia, with the bulk of his Third Army, pursued his way towards Champagne, through the Vosges, by Ober-Modern, as soon as he had repaired his losses at Wörth. The Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* with the Crown Prince wrote, on the 11th of August:—

There has been a shifting of quarters from village to village since I last wrote; indeed, the army of the Crown Prince is so active that this shifting of quarters is an almost daily occurrence. Everything is done in perfect order. The carriages are told off in a slow moving column, with mounted troopers at intervals to regulate the line of march, and when all are placed there is a halt of a few minutes to allow the Prince and his Staff to pass. Well may the villagers stare at the show, for they are not likely to see again so many fine horses and bright uniforms. Old and young crowd the wayside as His Highness goes by, and doff their caps respectfully, but without any sign of welcome. It is curious to see these German Frenchmen, or rather these Gallicized Germans, dealing with the invaders. The power of understanding one another makes their intercourse much less disagreeable than might be supposed. Yet, nevertheless, there is a strong sympathy with France among the Alsatian peasants, because they have, thanks to the conscription, such a number of their sons serving in the French Army. I notice that the younger folks can all speak a little French, though they answer the question of the soldiers, "Parlez vous

Chassepôt ? ” with a sententious “ Nein,” which seems to imply utter ignorance of the language referred to. Poor souls ! they are very much frightened by this astounding invasion, and make the most of their rough Alsatian dialect, as a means of propitiating the new and dreaded invaders of the empire. I must say, in justice to the German troops, that this dread of the invaders is founded on a notion of what might be, rather than on what really happens. Beyond compulsory service in country waggons to carry wounded men, or loads of hay, and compulsory sales of provisions to the military authorities, there is little to complain of. It is as with Wellington’s Army in Southern France in 1814, rather than as with the Allied Armies in that memorable year. No invasion can be pleasant to the conquered people, but this one of 1870 is conducted on the humane principles of modern warfare. The Crown Prince of Prussia has resolved to strike only at the French Government, and at the armed forces which oppose him, and to spare as far as possible the unfortunate people who inhabit the scene of hostilities.

And so this strange surprise to Europe, this invasion of France within three weeks of the declaration of war, goes steadily forward with all imaginable precaution. Railway lines are reopened, telegraph lines are laid down, and a swarm of German troops pours over the frontier. How strong the invading force will be in three days’ time it is better not to say. But Napoleon runs great risk of finding himself on a field of Leipsic when he makes his final stand. There has never been such a concentration of troops in the world’s history as this of the German armies in 1870. I spoke more than once of their tremendous efforts to send forward soldiers from Berlin, and even from the farthest extremity of Eastern Prussia. I was in St. Petersburg when war was declared, and as I travelled westward could see but one great mustering of soldiers and Landwehr men from Königsberg to the Rhine. In Berlin and in Saxony, in Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden, the country was all alive with armed men. The railway officials worked like galley slaves, the telegraph was never idle, and in a fortnight all was safe. Then the chances began to favour Germany. More and more troops were ready with each succeeding day. Bavarians were as ready as Prussians, South Germany as ready as the Northern Confederation, and France, which had sought the contest, was completely outstripped. It was almost as though some young blood in a public garden should fix a quarrel on a quiet-looking professional pugilist, and get a tremendous thrashing for his pains. France entered gaily and fiercely into the struggle, with splendid soldiers, but with no

thorough preparation. She was avowedly the weaker of the two in point of mere numbers. I know that a good many people at home, who delight in sweeping analogies, will be talking about Celtic weakness and Gothic strength, or something of that kind. But the brave Prussian army and its Southern comrades of Wörth and Weissenburg deserve more credit than that of being Goths. They have beaten an antagonist who was worthy of them. Marshal MacMahon was no mean commander, and his troops behaved like men. When I saw the field of Wörth, the heaps of bodies, and the long trains of wounded prisoners, I felt that France had no cause to blush for that disastrous day. The Zouaves lay thickly where they had stood, and the brigade of Cuirassiers was almost annihilated. It needed no theories about this or that race to explain the scene. The French commander had been out-generalled by the Crown Prince of Prussia, insomuch that His Highness had brought a large number of Germans to bear on a small number of Frenchmen, and the French had been overpowered by the cool, determined Germans, who had taken trouble to master their breech-loading tactics. What can we think of an organization which is rash enough to send Cuirassiers against an infantry that has the needle-gun? Yet this last act of madness was performed by the French. We can boast of doing more mischief at Balaclava; but this charge of steel-clad horsemen into a vineyard full of infantry was a wild act of self-destruction. I hear that the Cuirassiers were nearly all killed or taken, and certainly the number of dead horses and men, of breastplates and brass helmets scattered about, look like a fearful loss on their part. The fact is that the French committed two signal blunders—they underrated their enemy, and trusted to worn-out tactics against modern improvements. That day of Wörth was glorious for Germany because it was a triumph of patient preparation, as much as for the high courage shown by the German troops.

From their first massing of forces near Weissenburg, and their surprise of that position, to the present moment, when they are well advanced into French territory, the German armies have been the better prepared. They came on from Weissenburg to Wörth with a superior force, broke up the corps of MacMahon in a single battle, and have pushed steadily forward against the right flank of the French line. We do not know exactly how far Napoleon's subjects may be rallying to his support, but in these days of drenching rain we are consoled by feeling that his Imperial Majesty's plans of invasion must be now exchanged for a very cautious system of defence.

On the 12th of August the same Correspondent wrote:—

The movement of troops is incessant, though no one is told whither they are going; and with each advance the Prussians bring forward their *Feld-Post* and their military telegraph. A more perfect system of organization it is difficult to imagine. The columns of provisions creep like great serpents over the country; the active detachments of telegraph men push on with their light poles set up at intervals, and their slowly decreasing coil of wire; and the field post-office brings letters to the different divisions. From side to side for many a mile the whole country is on the move. Now a regiment of cavalry goes by, with infinite jingling of harness and clattering of hoofs. Now the bayonets of the infantry shine out among the trees, or there is an interminable train of guns dragged past. I fancy that the villagers are simply astounded at what they see, and think that all Germany is upon them. "All of us here?" The soldiers laugh, and tell of the other two great armies which are invading France. There is much less of the fierce assertion of nationality among the Germans since they have won, and much less talk of going to Paris, now that going there is quite on the cards. Everybody is in high spirits, which exhaustion of drinkables and torrents of rain cannot diminish. The Fatherland is quite safe; the war has scarcely troubled a single German village—not one in this part of the line—and, rain as it may, the men are thoroughly cheerful. They will be, as our lads express it, "bad to beat in their next engagement."

France is not properly fortified for a war with united Germany. These little places, which hold a few hundred men, and did well enough in old times, are useless against modern artillery. There is, for instance, an ancient fortress among wood-covered hills—a quaint picturesque stronghold of Alsace called La Petite Pierre. Once upon a time it was much esteemed as a check to an invader coming through the Vosges. But now it is abandoned without firing a shot. The black and white colours of Prussia wave over the citadel, and a quantity of military stores have been captured therein. I made a long excursion a few days ago in that direction, and am allowed to describe the fortress all the more readily that the French are supposed to know everything about it. There is an inner and an outer fort, with an unfinished curtain connecting them, and with new palisades erected to defend the approaches. The foundation rests on a solid rock, which is very steep to the westward, and an old drawbridge cuts off all communication with the outer works. It is a place that ought not to be

defended unless the inhabitants were first expelled, for every house would be down in six hours when once the cannonade began. I doubt whether it could be held at all if really heavy guns were brought into play. But it was not ready for defence when the Prussians came. The outer and more important work was unfinished. Therefore La Petite Pierre was abandoned, to the great relief of its inhabitants, who had feared destruction, and the Prussians quietly marched in. Now, if a strong fort, say an ironclad tower, had been upon this hill of which I speak, the Crown Prince must have sent heavy guns against it. I do not say that any mere fort by a roadside would hinder the German invasion, but this little fortress of La Petite Pierre, among its wood-covered hills, illustrates two points of the Frenchman's unreadiness for this strange upsetting of all their plans—first, the fort was old-fashioned and insufficient; secondly, it was not equipped for defence.

On the 14th the same Correspondent wrote, on the march through Lorraine:—

The brilliant Staff comes out of the village in the midst of wondering rustics, and the long train of head-quarters' carriages and waggons follow steadily behind. We cannot realize our being conquered by anybody; so it is better to fancy ourselves the conquerors, and to trot forth in the early morning with light hearts on the track of our victorious army. Do not imagine that we are the first to lead the way. That might do all very well in times of Knights-errant and Crusaders, when the "trusty glaive" was always at hand. But in times of needle-guns and organized warfare the head-quarters comes behind a mass of the cavalry and infantry, which makes it quite secure. It is only in great battles or sudden movements of some sort that the Staff would come very near the enemy. On ordinary marches they are in the rear of a large force. I think that the French know this, so I have not a shadow of doubt about telling it. There are the Light Cavalry, the Dragoons, and Lancers scattered over the country in our front. Then come bodies of infantry, supported by guns, and at a good distance from the front comes the head-quarters itself, with its field telegraph and post-office—a perfect centre of military civilization. The peasants are very curious to see the great people of the army ride forth, and gather by hundreds at the wayside. We have fancied ourselves following this gay troop of horsemen, for which all make way. Let us pass on through the village and look round us as we come into the open country. Those men under the trees yonder are Lancers watching the field telegraph. That dark mass of horses and waggons creep-

ing along the road is a column of ammunition moving towards the front. There are the sutlers' carts following the army resolutely wherever it may go, and there are the peasants, pressed into the service with their cattle, bringing loads of hay for the cavalry horses. It is not quite what we should wish for ourselves—the being pressed into a service, even for the pay which the men will get. But such is war, and they may think themselves lucky to be no worse off. They are not afraid of their invaders—at least not very much afraid—as we see by those peasant girls who stand chatting with the drivers of the artillery waggons. Nevertheless, we would rather not be invaded ourselves, and we will take the point of view of mere abstractions, of shadows gliding along the road. Forward from village to village; forward from one column to another; we glide to the front and find the Lancer outposts approaching the enemy with care. They look sharply about them. It is no joking matter to be shot through the head; and behind that clump of trees, just in front of them, they have a glimpse of French uniforms. Very cautiously they advance. Now we see the Frenchmen slowly winding their way up an opposite hill, and in ten minutes more the Lancers are in the village below. They want food, they want forage for their horses; they ask eagerly after liquor of any sort. But when we think of old world wars, this first arrival of the invaders seems a mild affair. The Staff need not be ashamed to ride to the front, for they will discover little more than small annexations of food and drink to charge against their advanced guard. It is a war in which there is no wish to deal harshly with the country people, who are known to have about as much to do with beginning it as the Lord Mayor of London.

The Staff of the Crown Prince of Prussia is made more brilliant by the presence of several other German Princes who are serving under his orders. There is the candidate for the Spanish throne, Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern, riding beside his kinsman to assert the right of Germans not to be bullied because Spaniards chose to manage their own affairs. There is the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, brother to our lamented Prince Consort, whose little principality is German and patriotic to the core. There is the young Prince of Mecklenburg, said to be very English in tastes and education, but with a warm heart for the cause of the great German Fatherland. These and other men of high position in Germany follow the Crown Prince of Prussia as he rides forth from halting-place to halting-place, always farther on French soil. You should stand at a corner of the village and see the Staff go by. I have mentioned in another letter that the peasants do not cheer. It

would be absurd if they did, for their sons are serving in the French army, though they are of German stock. The peasants do not cheer, but have a good long stare, hat in hand. I will not describe the procession as it passes, because this would be scarcely what those who ride in it would wish. My object is that you should understand the sort of war which is being waged, should see before you the French high roads with their lines of poplars, the crowded encampments and the advancing columns. I want you to picture the outposts far on in front, looking into every bush, and the Staff in its proper place, as a centre of management and direction. I would fain bring before you this strange, perplexing, unexpected sight which it is my lot to see—the challenger knocked down at the first encounter, the *grande nation* invaded with such deadly speed. We all thought that Prussia had a good chance, and I myself was inclined to back her heavily, as my letters have shown: but this sudden success takes away one's breath. You must realize the scene to measure its overwhelming effect—French *hotels de ville* occupied by helmeted Prussians, French peasants in blouses doing forced service to the Prussian commissariat. These things form part of the picture. You see the whole country alive with invaders, and the columns of infantry pressing forward like trains of working ants. Here are the men who make the conquest sure. These infantry soldiers are a special product of modern German training. They are the experts of the breech-loader. A long and careful training has made them steady in action and quick in their manœuvres. How they march, too! It is only this morning that our headquarters' escort performed another of those feats of rapid marching which have been our wonder of late. The poor dusty fellows kept up with horses and carriages for twelve or fifteen miles at a swinging pace, and in full campaign order. They must sometimes have been almost running, yet only two or three men fell out. Whatever may be the smartness of French marching—and it is admirable, I confess—it could not well beat this.

CHAPTER IV.

THE situation of the French army after the defeats of Wörth and Forbach was not desperate; nevertheless, only a decisive resolution could save it. The power of initiating offensive movements had passed into the hands of the enemy, but that of concentration and retreat still remained: yet only as a precarious possession. In a few days the great French army might wish in

vain for the last privilege of retreat. The remnant of MacMahon's army was beyond the Emperor's reach; it must make its own way in its own time to a position far in the rear of Metz, there to rejoin De Failly's, which had not fought at all, but had undertaken a long march, prescribed solely by regard for its own safety, and was somewhere near Neufchâteau, making by the Haute Marne for the camp at Châlons. Several Army Corps were, however, still intact, and to draw them together was the first care of the Emperor. Ladmirault, with the 4th Corps, fell back from Thionville to Metz; the Imperial Guard, under Bourbaki, and the 3rd Corps, under Bazaine, were encamped under the walls of that fortress. Frossard had retreated to the same stronghold to seek shelter for the shattered 2nd Corps, to which also a portion of Canrobert's 6th Corps had been brought up. Bazaine was ordered to occupy the line of the Nied, in front of Metz, to endeavour to rally the forces before him: otherwise the concentration described was effected at Metz. The German commander was quick to perceive his opportunity, and his movements were marked with the utmost vigour and decision. While the Crown Prince of Prussia was wending his way in the track of MacMahon, the great armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General Steinmetz, numbering probably a quarter of a million men, with 750 guns, were moving upon Metz, and threatening to shut the Emperor, his generals, and his army in. The only safety of the French army lay in instant retreat. Its leaders knew the fact, but the Emperor was commander-in-chief, and political considerations overbore the dictates of sound military policy. In the memorial which the Emperor indited at Wilhelms-höhe, and which has been published by an officer of his Staff, we have an account of the causes of an irresolution whose fatal effects were soon to become so apparent. We are told that the Emperor, "profoundly depressed at witnessing all his communications destroyed," and driven in these few days to think no longer of any but a defensive position, resolved immediately to lead back the army to the Camp of Châlons, where it might have gathered together the *débris* of Marshal MacMahon's army, Failly's corps, and that of Douay. This plan, when communicated to Paris, was at first approved by the Council of Ministers; but, two days afterwards, a letter from M. E. Ollivier informed the Emperor that, upon mature consideration, the Council had decided that it had been too hasty in approving the retreat of the army upon Châlons, since "the abandonment of Lorraine could only produce a deplorable effect on the public mind;" on this ground he advised the Emperor to renounce his project, and Napoleon yielded to his counsel.

It then became necessary to consider what use should be made

of this portion of the "Army of the Rhine," now become itself, the "Army of Metz." By the arrival of Canrobert with the reserves, it had now, the Emperor tells us, been raised to a strength of 140,000 men, and it received orders for its concentration around Metz, "in the hope that it might be able to fall upon one of the Prussian armies before they had effected their junction." No expectation could have been more preposterous and absurd; but then the excuse follows, that the action of the French was uniformly embarrassed "by the absolute ignorance in which we always remained concerning the position and the strength of the hostile armies. So well did the Prussians conceal their movements behind the formidable shelter of cavalry, which they deployed before them in all directions, that, notwithstanding the most persevering inquiries, it was never really known where the mass of their troops was, nor, in consequence, to what points the chief efforts of our army should be directed." Thus the precious week which followed the disastrous 6th of August was allowed to expire. The French could not act, for they knew neither the enemy's position nor his plan; they could not retreat, for the Ministers knew that Paris would not receive back a defeated Emperor. Thus the army stood motionless while the enemy prepared its ruin.

By the 13th General Steinmetz, with the First Army, had approached Metz on the northern side. Prince Frederick Charles had placed a portion of his army within a few miles of the fortress on the east, and with the rest was actually crossing the Moselle at Pont-à-Mousson, preparing to cut off the French army if it should move, or to invest it if it should stay in its place. The Emperor seems to have had no suspicion of the actual occurrence of that movement. But there were Generals who had represented to him the possibility that the army might be cut off from Paris, and so the State be deprived of its Head. He himself, too, felt that he "was being made responsible for the wretched situation of the army," so he resolved to resign the chief command into the hands of Marshal Bazaine, and proceed to the Camp at Châlons. The retreat which M. Emile Ollivier and his colleagues had countermanded, was now ordered by the Marshal on his own responsibility. But three or four precious days had been lost, and these had sufficed to enable a general who, like Count Moltke, always knew what he wanted, and how to obtain it, to secure his hold upon the Army of Metz.

It was on Sunday, the 14th of August, that the vanguard of the French began crossing the Moselle, on the road to Verdun; but its movements were sluggish and embarrassed. Three Army Corps—those of Bazaine (now commanded by General Decaen), of Ladmirault, and of Frossard—remained on the east of Metz,

as if certain of being able to retire in safety whenever they liked. Prince Frederick Charles, however, had not, in the judgment of Count Moltke, had sufficient start in his flanking march to make it prudent to permit these corps to follow him, as they began to show signs of doing. With a view, therefore, of occupying them, of covering the march of troops crossing at Pont-à-Mousson, and of delaying the general retreating movement of the enemy, the German commander-in-chief ordered General Steinmetz to make an attack on those French corps lying east of Metz. The engagement became the first of a brief series of the most sanguinary battles of this war. The French held several villages, where they had entrenched themselves, and occupied numerous lines of rifle pits, inflicting great loss on the enemy. That they suffered much in turn is shown by the fact that in one of their rifle pits no fewer than 781 dead were found. In the end, the French retired to the shelter of the fortress. Some of the aspects of the battle were thus described by a Correspondent of the *Daily News*, who was shut up in Metz, in a letter dated August 15 :—

Yesterday we thought all chance of sending letters gone, for we got nothing even from Paris. But this morning I hear a post will start for the capital, and I take my chance of your getting what I am able to tell from the inside of a town which is surrounded by armies—whether French or Prussian does not much matter so far as news is concerned. At eleven o'clock yesterday Bazaine effected a reconnaissance with one division. At two, a battle commenced on the right, at Borny. Till four it was of no great importance, but then the 4th Army Corps, forming the first line of battle, accomplished a manœuvre intended to deceive the Prussians into the belief that it was retreating. This was at a quarter past four. The Prussians rushed forward and attacked with surprising vigour. Then the 4th Corps, whose retreat to the left was a mere feint, fell at once on the enemy's flank, while Canrobert, on the right, attacked simultaneously. The Prussian attack meantime had been developed in great force on the French centre. The movements on both sides were effected with singular precision, and the whole spectacle was like a review at Châlons. The Prussians advanced in close column against the French line, which their artillery, splendidly served as it was, had vainly attempted to shake. The French officers consider that the Prussian infantry is relatively inferior to their artillery. The needle-gun is heavy, and appears to incommode them greatly when climbing a height or moving rapidly over broken ground. The soldiers themselves are active. They fire lying flat on the ground,

seeking cover from every irregularity, but do not put their knapsacks, as the French do, to make little ramparts in front of them, and rests for their guns. The Prussians fired with great deliberation, while the French rattled away as fast as they could discharge their Chassepôts. The regiments most closely engaged were the 69th, 90th, 44th, 60th, 80th, 33rd, 54th, 65th, and 85th of the Line, the 11th and 15th Foot Chasseurs, and the 8th, 9th, and 10th Batteries of the 1st Regiment of Artillery. Those which suffered most were the 44th and 90th of the Line, and 15th Foot Chasseurs. The 44th especially was terribly shattered, while the 85th, though in the thickest of the action, lost but thirty-five men killed and wounded. The colonel of the 44th was killed. The colonel of the 3rd Horse Chasseurs, and Generals Duplessis and Castamar, were wounded. The above details are mostly gathered from officers coming into town after the fight was over. At the beginning I followed a troop of Hussars as far as permitted, and what I saw of the fight was from a hillock, close by the walls. A Staff officer came to summon the Hussar regiment, with some officers of which I was seated in a café. In five minutes they were off, and halted at first on the hillock above mentioned. On a sudden signal they went tearing away to the front, and in a moment more the artillery on both sides had covered the valley of the river, and the whole works in front and the ground beyond, with a thick cloud of smoke. There was nothing to do but to return to town. By half-past eight in the evening a bulletin was placarded in the streets, saying:—"Firing is nearly over. The Prussian lines extended three leagues. Ground gained in every direction." It does not say by whom ground was gained. Officers who came back later from the field maintained that victory rested with the French, that the Prussians had been out-generalled and lost heavily, while the French were comparatively little exposed. But a Prussian officer who had been taken prisoner, and who came into my café on parole with a French officer, told a different story. Said he, "You had better surrender at discretion. We are more than 200,000 strong. You will be crushed. As to the battle, you had your own way at first, for we believed we had only a division in front of us, but you know what the end was." It was difficult to question even officers closely, so keen are still the suspicions about spies; and to ask whether the French army had suffered a defeat would be to expose myself to instant expulsion, or worse. Hence I can give you only such particulars as are collected in the ways I have mentioned. I do not know why the advanced columns have returned again under the walls of the fortress.

This morning, Monday, there were reports of heavy artillery towards Thionville, but all is again quiet. We only know that Sunday's conflict was not decisive, and that another battle is imminent. The troops are never at rest, manœuvres in one direction or another are going on constantly. Orders have this moment been issued that no civilian shall leave the city on any pretext. Two shots from Fort St. Quentin have just demolished the head of the Thionville Railway bridge at Metz Station. I am told it was done to cut off a detachment of 500 Prussians encamped at Montigny, who attempted to cross the Moselle, and were seen from the fort. At seven this morning two Prussian cuirassiers entered that town. They were followed by four others. Breakfast was served to the six, and paid for; they promenaded the town till eight, and withdrew, not only unmolested by anybody, but carrying off two prisoners—a St. Cyr pupil and an orderly. All this, at a mile and a half from Metz, will give you some notion of the dash and boldness of the Prussian cavalry. Last night we thought we heard the Prussians shouting victory, notwithstanding the defeat we believe they suffered. But it seems some of their regiments sing hymns nightly, with accompaniments from their military bands, a custom they have preserved from the battle of Leuthen, where they advanced to the charge singing Luther's Hymn. They end with hurrahs. We heard them distinctly. The Emperor and his Staff, Prince Imperial and all, are at Longeville. As I write, there passes a closed carriage escorted by a picket of Hussars in command of a captain of the Staff. It contains a Prussian envoy, re-conducted to his own lines. French officers say he brought a request for an armistice, and admitted that Prussian losses were considerable. But he did not tell his errand to them nor to me.

This battle, which was at first known as that of Pange, was designated by the King of Prussia after the name of the village of Courcelles, near which it took place, and which after the investment of Metz became the scene of more than one sanguinary struggle. Each side claimed the victory: probably the Germans suffered the greater loss in killed and wounded, but they achieved their end; they gained time for Prince Frederick Charles's advance, and they delayed the French retreat. The *Official Journal* of Paris, while reporting the battle as a repulse of the Prussians, announced that the completion of the works of the fortifications of Paris would be pushed forward with all possible speed. From that time, also, the Berlin journals began to discuss the conditions under which Metz might be besieged and taken.

The 15th of August had been for many years a French holiday, but now no one had time to remember the Fête Napoléon. Marshal Bazaine employed it in moving the remainder of his army out of Metz, which was now left to its garrison, under General Coffinière. The dilatoriness of Bazaine's movements at a crisis when his army was to be saved, if at all, by its legs, has been universally censured. He must by this time have been aware that his enemy was following or attending him in force, and that he had to guard at least against an attack on his flank or rear. Nevertheless, his movements were so slow, that night found him not more than a dozen miles on his way. Two roads lead from Metz to Verdun; the one more direct, by Vionville, the other to the north of it, by Doncourt and Etain. They diverge at Gravelotte, about four miles from Metz. Along that road Bazaine was advancing on the 15th, without serious molestation, but not without many indications of the presence of the enemy. By nightfall he appears to have been satisfied with his achievement, for he sent word to Paris that by the next day he should be at Etain with all his army. Count Moltke had occupied the same day in placing eight Army Corps on a line curving up from Pont-à-Mousson, in a north-westerly direction to the roads by which the Marshal was retreating. The next day (August 16th), the head of the French column, which was moving on the southern road to Verdun, was violently attacked by the 3rd Prussian Corps. The assault fell upon Frossard's troops, who had been defeated so disastrously at Forbach (or Speichern), and the corps wavered and blocked up the road. The first blow had been struck by the Prussian Cavalry, but it was soon followed by the Infantry of the 3rd, which, as one French corps after another came up, was supported by divisions of the nearest German corps, until the battle raged along the whole line from Mars-la-Tour to Rezonville. At first the German line looked northwards, but as the corps successively took ground to the left, they at length formed a line looking eastward, the left extremity of which reached to the northern of Bazaine's two lines of retreat—that by the road to Etain. The French fought this battle with superior numbers, and Bazaine does not appear to have thoroughly comprehended the enemy's tactics, or to have perceived the extent of his own danger. But, tactics apart, Bazaine should have cut his way through at any sacrifice, on this the last day on which he could have done so at a not unreasonable sacrifice of life. If he is accused of want of vigour and of determination, it is not because he did not fight a good battle and inflict great loss upon the enemy, for it is admitted that the Germans lost 16,000 men on the 16th. But Bazaine

was fighting for the very existence of his army as an active field force, and for the safety of Paris, which no other army but his was able to defend. Looking away from the great strategical object to be gained, and referring only to the loss he had inflicted, Bazaine, in his letters to Paris, claimed this battle as a victory, and announced that he had retired "in order to obtain ammunition." The Germans also claimed the victory, and announced that they had captured two eagles, seven guns, and nearly 2,000 prisoners. They had got, however, what was more important to them than any trophies — they held Marshal Bazaine's line of retreat. A grand charge of the cavalry of the 16th German Corps had decided the fortunes of this bloody day, and given Count Moltke the assurance, that although more hard fighting might be before the German army, it had the movements of the enemy under its control. Bazaine that night fell back to Gravelotte, within five miles of Metz, yielding seven miles of the road by which he had marched on the 15th. This was the battle which, at first called after the villages Mars-la-Tour and Doncourt, has been named by the victors that of Vionville.

Marshal Bazaine was not long in perceiving the magnitude of his defeat, and set himself to oppose the enemy with a vigour which he had not before displayed. He felt sure that he should again be attacked, and spent the 17th in the preparation of a system of defence of the most formidable kind. Bazaine has been severely censured for the strictly defensive nature of his tactics at this crisis, but it should be remembered that he commanded soldiers who, from the beginning of this campaign, and before he assumed the command, had known nothing but defeat, and who firmly believed, even when, as at Vionville, it was not true, that they were invariably outnumbered. It should also be borne in mind that, in a great trial of strength, such as was impending, he might reasonably expect to be outnumbered, and that by troops whose tenacious courage he had tested. He had now under him from 120,000 to 130,000 men, and with these he occupied a series of eminences, extending, in a north-easterly direction, from the village of Gravelotte to St. Privat le Montagne, beyond the road to Briey. The position was one of great natural strength, which no trouble was spared to increase by entrenchments, rifle pits, and batteries. Its strongest part was the left, at Gravelotte. The Prussian commander resolved not to begin the general attack until this strong position could be assailed on its right flank, and for this purpose it was necessary to move several corps right across the enemy's front—an operation which Bazaine permitted with singular forbearance. A

Correspondent who witnessed the battle from the King's field head-quarters—near the Prussian right—wrote to the *Daily News* the following account:—

The first realization we had at Pont-à-Mousson of the extent to which fighting had been going on at the front was the coming in of wounded men. At first it was surmised that these had been wounded in skirmishes; but on the 16th, late in the evening, there were signs that the work was becoming warm. On that evening soldiers with ghastly wounds walked about the market-place in Pont-à-Mousson, surrounded by eager groups of their newly-arrived comrades, and told a story of disaster. Poor fellows! it surely was disaster to them—borne away as they had been from the field without having heard of any result. I stood among these groups, and the narratives of the men all amounted to their having been set to confront a much larger force than their own, and that their division had been cut up. I was struck by the fact that, though there was some dissatisfaction suggested by their tone of voice, I heard no word uttered by narrators or listeners which accused any one. They dwelt rather on the fact that a heavy blow had been dealt on the 14th; and that though the 10th Division had, as an available organization, been demolished, it had sold its life dear. On the 17th the wounded from the preceding day began to pour into Pont-à-Mousson. They were brought in in long uncovered grain carts, lying upon hay. From my window, which overlooked the main street, and commanded also a view of the market-place, I counted more than ninety of these long carts, each holding on an average about ten men. Many more must have gone to the various hospitals. It was strange to see the French citizens unable to conceal their joy. But now came the other side of the account. The streets began to swarm with other waggons, with other wounded—the wearers of red trousers. Now and then a batch of prisoners. And at length a carriage came in with a French general. It was followed by a vast crowd of French, and for a little time it seemed as if there might be a collision between the inhabitants and the Prussians, so earnest were the demonstrations of the populace. But it was now at least evident that the struggle was very serious at the front. At midnight, or a little after (17th—18th), all the trumpets for miles around began to sound. This was the first time we had been startled at that hour by such wild music. Trumpet answered to trumpet through all the bivouacs around the little city. For several days previous there had been troops almost perpetually marching through; but now the tramp through every street and by-way made between

midnight and dawn a perpetual roar. Hastily dressing, I ran out into the darkness, and managed to get a seat on a waggon that was going in the direction of the front—now understood to be a mile or two beyond the village of Gorze. Gorze is some twelve miles from Pont-à-Mousson. On our way we met a considerable batch of French prisoners, who were looked upon with great curiosity by the continuous file of German soldiers with whom we advanced; but only one or two offensive cries towards the prisoners were heard, and these fortunately they could not understand. The way was so blocked with waggons, &c., that I finally concluded that I could go the six or seven miles remaining better on foot. So I got out of my carriage and began to walk and run swiftly ahead. At Novéant-aux-Prés, on the Moselle, about half way to Metz, I found vast bodies of cavalry, Uhlans and Hussars, crossing the river by a pontoon bridge, and hurrying at the top of their speed towards Gorze. Hastening my steps, I soon heard the first thunder of the cannonade, seemingly coming from the heart of a range of hills on the right. Passing through the village and ascending to the high plain beyond, I found myself suddenly on a battle-field, strewn (literally) as far as my eye could reach with dead bodies—the field of the battle of Vionville on the 16th. In one or two parts of the field parties were still burying the dead, chiefly Prussians. The French, being naturally buried last, were still lying in vast numbers on the ground. A few of these—I saw five—were not dead. As I hurried on, a splendid regiment of cavalry came on behind, and when they came to the brow of the hill, they all broke out with a wild hurrah, and dashed forward. A few more steps, and I gained the summit, and saw the scene which had roused their cry, and even seemed to thrill their horses. It would be difficult to imagine a grander battle-field. From the particular hill to which I had been directed to come by good authority—it was occupied by the Royal Head-quarters—the sweep of the Prussian and French centres could be seen, and a considerable part of their wings. The spot where I stood was fearful—it was amidst ghastly corpses, and burdened with the stench of dead horses, of which there were a great many. I was standing on the battle-field of the 16th, on the Prussian side. On the left stretched like a silver thread the road to Verdun, to Paris also, for the possession of which this series of battles had begun. It was between lines of poplars, which stood against the horizon on my left, and on as far as the eye could reach towards Metz, with military regularity. Strung on this road like beads were the pretty villages, each with its church tower, which, although they have separate names,

are really only a few hundred yards apart—Mars-la-Tour, Flavigny (a little south of the road), Vionville, Rezonville, Malmaison, Gravelotte. On my right were the thickly-wooded hills, behind which was the most important village of the neighbourhood, the one I had just left—Gorze. Such was the foreground of this battle, which should, one would say, be called the battle of Gravelotte, for it was mainly over and beyond that devoted little town that it raged. The area I have indicated is about four miles square. Owing to having come on foot rather than along the blocked road, I was fortunate enough to arrive just as the battle waxed warm—that is, about noon. The great representatives of Prussia were standing on the same ground watching the conflict. Among them the only ones I recognized were the King, Count Bismarck, General von Moltke, Prince Charles, Prince Frederick Charles, Prince Adalbert, and Adjutant Kranski. Lieutenant-General Sheridan, of the United States, was also present.

At this moment the French were making a most desperate effort to hold on to the last bit of the Verdun road, that between Rezonville and Gravelotte—or that part of Gravelotte which on some maps is called Malmaison. Desperate but unavailing! For every one man in their ranks had two to cope with, and their line, at the place indicated, was already beginning to waver. Soon it was plain that this wing was withdrawing to a new position. This was swiftly taken up under protection of a continuous blaze of their artillery from heights beyond the village. The movement was made in good order, and the position reached was one that, I believe, nine out of ten military men would have regarded as normally impregnable. My reader will observe that the battle-field was from this time transferred to the regions beyond Gravelotte. The fields in front of that village were completely covered by the Prussian reserves, and over it interminable lines of soldiers were perpetually marching onward—disappearing into the village, emerging on the other side of it with flaming volleys. This second battle-field was less extensive than the first, and brought the combatants into fearfully close quarters. The peculiarity of it is that it consists of two heights, intersected by a deep ravine. This woody ravine is over 100 feet deep, and at the top from 200 to 300 yards wide. The side of the chasm next to Gravelotte, where the Prussians stood, is much lower than the other side, which gradually ascended to a great height. From this their commanding eminence the French held their enemies fairly beneath them, and subjected them to a raking fire. Their artillery was stationed far up by the Metz road, between its trees. There was not an instant's

cessation of the roar; and easily distinguishable amid all was the curious grunting roll of the mitrailleuse. The Prussian artillery was to the north and south of the village, the mouths of the guns on the latter side being necessarily raised for an awkward upward fire. The French stood their ground and died, the Prussians moved ever forward and died—both by hundreds, I had almost said thousands; this for an hour or two that seemed ages, so fearful was the slaughter. The hill where I stood commanded chiefly the conflict behind the village and to the south of it. The Prussian reinforcements on their right filed out of the Bois des Ognons; and it was at that point, as they marched on to the field, that one could perhaps get the best idea of the magnitude of the invading army now in the heart of France. There was no break whatever for four hours in the march of the men out of that wood. It seemed almost as if all the killed and wounded had recovered and came again out of the wood. Birnam Wood advancing to Dunsinane was not a more ominous sight to Macbeth than these men of General Göben's army, shielded by the woods till they were fairly within range of their enemies. So the French must have felt, for between four and five o'clock they concentrated a most furious fire upon that point, and shelled the woods perpetually. Their fire here took effect. The line of Prussian infantry became less continuous from that direction. About five o'clock, however, an infantry brigade emerged from the same point. As soon as they did so they advanced by double-quick time towards the point where their services were needed. I watched this brigade through a strong glass from the first. It resembled some huge serpent gliding out on the field. But, lo! it left a track behind it—a dark track. Beneath the glass that track is resolved into fallen, struggling men.

As the horrid significance of that path so traced came upon me I gazed yet more intently. Many of those who had fallen leapt up and ran forward, struggling to catch up with their comrades again. I did not see any running backward, though many fell in their effort to rush on. I do not know whether after that another movement was made from behind the wood; but I do know that half an hour afterwards vast numbers of troops began to march over the southern edge of the hill where I was standing towards the battle-field, and I have an impression that these were General Göben's men moving by a less dangerous route. The conflict on the Prussian left was so fierce that it soon became nearly lost to us by reason of its smoke. Now and then this would open a little, and drift under the wind, and then we could see the French sorely

tried, but maintaining themselves steadily. In order to see this part of the conflict better, I went forward as near as I thought safe. It seemed to me that in the vicinity of Malmaison the French were having the best of it. But it must have been only because they were more visible on their broad height, and fought so obstinately—plainly silencing a battery now and then. But from this northern point also there are more forces to come; and from far behind them—away seemingly in the direction of Verneville—huge bombs are coming and bursting with terrible force upon the French ranks. These were the men and these the guns of Prince Frederick Charles, who was slowly veering southward to make his connection with Steinmetz's army, completing the investment of Metz.

The battle raged at this point with indescribable fury. The French Generals must have known the significance of these new guns, and known that, if their right retreated, the result must be that incarceration in Metz which now exists. How long they held out here I do not know. I could hear that the puff of their guns was from a gradually receding line; that the mysterious pillars of cloud from the north as steadily approached; but the last fired on that terrible evening were on that side, and the point must have been yielded at about nine o'clock.

Perhaps I should here say something of the movements of the King, and those with him. The King's face, as he stood gazing upon the battle-field, had something almost plaintive in it. He hardly said a word; but I observed that his attention was divided between the exciting scenes in the distance and the sad scenes nearer his feet—where they were just beginning (what must yet be a long task) to bury the French who fell on the Tuesday before. On these he gazed silently, and, I thought, sadly. Count Bismarck was intent only on the battle, and could not conceal his excitement and anxiety; if it had not been for the King, I am pretty sure he would have gone nearer; and, as it was, his towering form was always a little ahead of the rest. When the French completely gave up their hold upon the road up to Gravelotte, the horses of the grand head-quarters were hastily called, and the party mounting them, rode, with the King at their head, swiftly down to a point not very far from the village. Then shouts and cheers arose, which I could plainly hear at the point they had left, where, not having a horse, I was compelled to remain a little longer.

A little after four o'clock a strange episode took place. From the distant woods on the left a splendid regiment of cavalry

galloped out. They paused a moment at the point where the Conflans road joins that leading to Metz; then they dashed up the road towards Metz. This road between Gravelotte and St. Hubert is cut through the hill, and there are on each side of it cliffs from forty to sixty feet high, except at the point where it traverses the deep ravine behind the village. When it is remembered that at this time the culminating point to which this road directly ascends was held by the French, it will not be wondered at that only a moiety of that regiment survived. What the survivors accomplished I do not know, nor could I learn the name and number of the regiment. The situation hardly admits yet of our asking many questions. But their plunge into that deep cut in the hill-side, where next day I saw so many of them and their horses lying dead, was of that brave, unhesitating, unfaltering kind, which is so characteristic of German soldiers, among whom cowards, stragglers, and deserters seem to be absolutely unknown, in whatever rank.

I must record, also, what seemed an inexplicable thing. The army of Steinmetz was fighting very hard, and evidently suffering heavily. It was in the centre of Gravelotte, though occasionally rallying to one side or the other. Though they had large reserves, these had been diminished to an important extent by the engagements of the 14th and 16th. A considerable portion of his army required rest, and two divisions perhaps, certainly one, reorganization. There seemed at one time—about half-past four—some danger that the intensity of the fighting required on the right and left extremes would produce a kind of atrophy along that very central Verdun road for which the armies were struggling. At that time a vast army came from some region utterly mysterious to us who had been following the army for some miles. They came over the very point which had been the Royal head-quarters in the morning. Their march was begun at the time I have mentioned, and did not cease at all—not even after dark—so long as the firing was still going on upon the heights. This new army—whose was it?—whence was it? It did not come from the direction of Göben, nor of Steinmetz, nor of Prince Frederick Charles. Of course it could not be said that it did not belong to either of these, but the cry and rumour went around that these men were from the army of the Crown Prince. I do not know whether to believe this or not, but it is freely said and believed by many officers here that a detachment of the Crown Prince's army was sent up from Toul to help, if help were needed. To whomsoever or wheresoever this Army Corps (for it was about that in extent) belonged,

its presence was nearly all that was required. It was laid along the road, out of immediate danger, so that if the French centre had defeated the troops with which it was contending, it must simply have fallen into the hands of a fresh and prepared corps.

The advance of this new corps must have been felt by them as a final, a fatal blow for that day. Like the spirits in the "Inferno," their enemies were consumed only to spring up to full stature again. They must have realized how hopelessly they were outnumbered. From that time the struggle at that part became very weak on the French side, and the Prussians got a decided hold farther up the Metz road—that is, on the southern side of it. But there seemed to be a redoubled fury on their left. From seven o'clock to eight there was little firing beyond the village, but a great tower of cloud and fire at each extremity of the battle-field. A little before eight a large white house on the heights beyond Gravelotte caught fire. It seemed through the gloom to be a church; its spire was now a mass of flame, and it sent up a vast cloud of black smoke, which contrasted curiously with the white smoke of battle.

Darkness was now drawing on, and after eight we could trace the direction of troops by the fiery paths of their bombs, or the long tongue of fire darting from each cannon's mouth. The lurid smoke-clouds of burning houses joined with the night to cast a pall over the scene and hide it for ever. At half-past eight o'clock one more terrible attack by the French on the Prussian right—and that is over. At a quarter to nine a fearful volley against the extreme Prussian left, a continuous concert of artillery, and the growling whirr of the mitrailleuse above all—and then that is still. The battle of Gravelotte is ended, the Prussians hold the heights beyond the Bois de Vaux—heights which command the surrounding country up to the limits of the gun-ranges of Metz. As I went back to the village of Gorze to pass the night, I turned at the last point to look upon the battle-field. It was now a long, earth-bound cloud, with two vast fires—burning houses—at each end of it. The day had been beautiful, and now the stars looked down with splendour, except where the work of agony and death had clouded the glow of heaven.

The great battle of Gravelotte, the last of the series which began on the 14th of August at Courcelles, has been called the Borodino of the campaign. The thanksgivings which went up throughout Germany for its victorious issue were tempered with sorrow and awe. The slaughter had been terrific. The Prussian Government was slow to proclaim the extent of its

losses, but very soon a wail went up throughout Germany, as it was found that hardly a family had escaped bereavement. The flower of the Prussian nobility fell on that fatal day. But the victory, if dearly bought, was assured. General Palikao, who had succeeded M. Emile Ollivier as First Minister of the Empire at Paris, was interrogated day after day in the Chamber, and insisted that the advantage was with the French. So far, he said, was it from being true that the Germans had been successful, that Marshal Bazaine had "driven the Prussians into the quarries of Jaucourt." Bazaine, however, had sent word to Paris that his retreat was cut off, and two days after the battle he reported that the enemy showed signs of "an intention to invest him." By the 22nd this intention had become a fact. From that day dates the series of works by which the batteries erected to close the roads from Metz to Verdun gradually became a system of fortifications that girdled and ultimately strangled the proudest military capital of France. Bazaine had lost the opportunity of breaking through the lines of the assailants, and, shut in at Metz, he was destined not only to surrender his own army there, but to draw another army towards him to its utter destruction.

CHAPTER V.

THE hopes of Paris and of France were now turned to the camp at Châlons, whither MacMahon had led the troops which he had been able to rally from his beaten army, and to which also De Failly had conducted a corps that in all the war had not once seen the enemy. Thither, too, the Emperor had gone, and at a council of war it was resolved that General Trochu should command the army in Paris; that the troops collected at Châlons should be directed towards the capital under the orders of Marshal MacMahon; and that the Emperor should go to Paris. To this arrangement the Council of Ministers by which the Empress-Regent was surrounded offered the most decided objection. Paris, it was said, was in a perfect state of defence, with a numerous garrison, and the army of Châlons ought to be employed in breaking the blockade of Metz. The return of the Emperor would be misunderstood by the public.

While these questions were being discussed, the position of Marshal MacMahon at Châlons became daily less tenable. During the memorable fortnight that ended in the grand defeat of Gravelotte, the Crown Prince had been leading his great army through Lorraine, and was approaching the plains of Champagne. It is time to glance at the features of his unresisted progress.

As the army was making its way past Phalsburg, the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* wrote, on the 15th of August:—

Since my last letter there has been marching to the front and spreading out on the flanks. There has been more and more French territory occupied by the Prussians, and yet no further fighting of importance, as far as we know, up to the present moment. It would appear that the French are concentrating their forces on Metz, and, perhaps, on Châlons. We see that they wish to avoid a contest until they have a better chance than at Wörth, which is very wise on their part. Meanwhile the fortresses of Strasburg, Phalsburg, and Bitsche form islands in the sea of invasion. I will not say barriers against invasion, but islands to impede the rush of the tide a little. They are the material holds which France still keeps on her semi-German province, and in case of a check, might prove dangerous to the rear-guard of the great invading army. I set no high value on any but first-class fortresses. A place that would hold fifty thousand men in the neighbourhood of Wörth would have saved Alsace from invasion—or saved all but the north-eastern part of it, at any rate—if only MacMahon had made his stand behind the works. But little fortresses like Bitsche and Phalsburg are useless, save as checks to the invader. They cannot stop him for an instant, though they can and do occupy many of his troops. Here is Phalsburg, for example, which has already detained a number of German guns for two or three days, and which, when I last saw it, showed no signs of giving in. True, the guns thus detained are of light calibre. They are nevertheless kept from other work, and this is something for Phalsburg to do.

The town was sharply cannonaded this morning, and I went to see the German batteries open fire. There was a slight haze over the surrounding country at daybreak, but as the sun grew more powerful, the haze lifted into gently driving clouds. A breeze, just strong enough to temper the heat of the weather, stirred the leaves of the tall poplar trees along the straight French *chaussées*, and it was altogether as fine a morning as you could wish to see. From a hillock behind the village of Zilling, there was a splendid view of both the attack and defence. Phalsburg could be seen among the trees at the top of a stretch of rising ground, and we could distinguish a part of the old rampart with its shady avenue. To our left, across the open fields, dotted with red-roofed farm buildings, was some rising ground opposite to Phalsburg, and here were the besieging batteries, which could scarcely be distinguished at all

until their fire commenced. The whole district, for miles away, was spread out like a map before us, and we saw the Vosges mountains to the eastward shutting us off from the valley of the Rhine. Had it not been such a deadly game that was to be played, such a terrible moment of anxiety for the people of the little town, there could have been no pleasanter excursion than this one to see the batteries begin their work. I tell no secret when I say that the German attack was made with field artillery, and that a great many of these light guns had been brought into position. The capture of Phalsburg is an important point for the Crown Prince, but not important enough to make the army wait for heavy siege guns. Prussian tactics are to push forward and mask the fortresses which are encountered on the way, leaving a few battalions to watch them.

From our positions on the hillock behind Zilling everything is to be seen. Now a puff of white smoke goes up on the left and a fierce rush through the air tells of a passing shell. It falls in the town. Poor souls within, they did not fancy when war was declared how soon their rafters would be crashing about their ears! Yet they live in a fortified place, and must take their chance. But we cannot help a wish that the shells may only damage public property, as shriek after shriek through the air tells of their passage. Now there is firing from the right. The French gunners have manned their pieces, and reply in excellent style. Flash after flash comes out from the old rampart. The smoke curls up among those shady trees where the garrison have often sat in summer evenings with pipe or cigar, and where the nursemaids have brought children to play. You know the look of these old ramparts in peace time, and can fancy them now, with only soldiers upon them, who are in no sporting mood. There is flash after flash from the ramparts and from the opposite rising ground! There is a constant whistling and shrieking across the space between, and a flying up of dust among the German guns, or a crash among the roofs of the town, as one side or the other makes a hit. If Phalsburg is in good order, the determined commandant may earn promotion by a long defence; but if his works once get disabled, he is lost. The Germans have a strong force, as we can see, ready to advance, and after Weissenburg we know that mere ramparts will not stop them. See the dark-coloured smoke rising above the trees and floating away behind the church tower. One column of smoke, then another. It is clear that houses are burning, but not so clear that the French guns are silenced. They fire more slowly than their assailants, and seem to aim rather high.

But there is heavy metal in the booming reports which came from the Phalsburg ramparts. Three distinct columns of dark smoke rise from the town. It is sad to think of the suffering of any inhabitants who may have rashly remained. What would our friend the "Conscrit" of Erckmann-Chatrian's delightful tales say if he saw the days of the great war come back again, and the foe from beyond the Rhine besieging his dear old town? That big gun from the rampart booms forth again, and the smoke-clouds rise thicker than ever. It is a good defence. One can fancy how the hearts of the villagers round about must beat at each shriek of the besiegers' shells. They have doubtless friends and relations who may be injured in person or property by every shot that is fired. Would that the lesson of the "Conscrit" and its sequel had gone home in France, and that this war had not been brought about!

The people have become more and more French as we have advanced. They have gradually ceased to speak German at all, and the confusion of a veritable foreign conquest has arisen. From the stolid careless air of the Alsatian peasants we have come among men who are bitterly wounded at what is happening around them. The fluent, though rough, German dialect of a few days back is exchanged for a stray sentence of broken German, and a copious supply of clear metallic French, rattled out with an irreproachable accent. We are at last really in France. I have seen twenty cases of mistaken phrases, and of, consequently, mistaken wrath. "*Sagen sie mir wo ist das Haupt-Quartier?*" is met by "*Ah, Monsieur, nous n'avons plus du cognac;*" and so on, with every variety of blunder. The soldiers are not inclined to be harsh, if only they get what they think they ought to have, and there is nothing to alarm the inhabitants in the demeanour of their terrible foes. But this difference of language begins to make the every-day intercourse of conquerors and conquered far from smooth. The French accept their ill-luck fairly enough; what they are put out of temper by is being shouted at in strange tongues and shaken by the shoulder if they are dull. One of their favourite theories is that all civilized men speak a little of the language of the world, and here are thousands of men, civilized enough to outshoot the Chassepôt, who speak not a single intelligible word. It is very hard for our lively neighbours. Let me do them justice—let me do both sides justice—they bear it like sensible men, and the Germans are not angry or vindictive. I cannot but think that the whole scene as we advance is a tribute to modern civilization. Here are young girls standing laughing at the cottage doors, not a bit afraid of violence; and we pass after a hundred thousand men,

more or less, have gone by along that same road. It would not have been so in the Thirty Years' War. It would scarcely have been so some fifty years back. But here it is to-day. The village maidens stand half shy, half curious, to see the Prince and his Staff ride on their way; the old people sit basking in the sunshine, and shaking their heads over the evil days. One can remember 1814, with the Allies going to Paris; another has seen something of the army of the First Napoleon, and thinks that if the Old Guard were alive they would make a breakfast of these gentlemen. I notice that the younger and more active men look gloomily at the long columns which pass. The honour of *La Belle France* is involved in this affair, and they are sad to see her territory invaded. Take it as a whole, the conduct of the people is quiet and reasonable. They shrug their shoulders and say with a smile, We have not had our turn yet; wait till the Emperor is ready!

It is the Fête Napoléon, and no flags or fireworks are allowed in honour of the day. Nevertheless I notice that many villagers are in holiday attire. The habit of the thing is followed without any particular care to compliment the Imperial family, for, as you may imagine, I hear many curses against the policy of war. As we came along to-day through the harvest-fields, a few people were at work, in spite of the fête, and the invasion, and everything else, for, as one of the peasants said, it is such a hard time for them that they must earn all they can. A battle must soon occur, but we know so little of the French movements, that it is impossible to say in which direction the blow will fall. "Forward to Paris" is the cry of the German soldiers. The commanders are content as yet to bear heavily against the French centre in Lorraine, and to threaten the road to Châlons.

On the 17th, the same Correspondent wrote from near Nancy:—

In all the panic of the invasion, and amid all the losses of the French, that bold Governor of Phalsburg, General Talhouet, has stood out as an example of what governors of fortresses should be. He was gallantly holding his own when we had a glimpse of his battered defences, and of the smoke from the burning town. He received a flag of truce with a firm refusal to surrender, and added, that next day, it being the fête of His Majesty the Emperor, he should fire a salute of twenty-one guns. The salute was not to be fired from the front, but from the flank of the works, to show that it was not part of the defence. I have heard the Prussian officers speak loudly in praise of this Phalsburg commandant. "If we do starve him out," they say, "we

will give him a good dinner when he comes to our camp." And so they would, you may depend.

I have passed through the city of Nancy, which was full of German troops. The Bavarian part of the Southern Army was there in full force. Sky-blue uniforms were to be seen at every turn. Crested helmets of the Bavarian infantry were thronging the footways, and fresh-faced young soldiers looked out of upper windows by dozens. The numerous French inhabitants seemed absolutely stupefied, and groups of well-dressed men stood staring at the invaders as though they had never seen soldiers before. It was a striking sight—the large French city occupied by foreigners; the subjects of the Emperor burdened by quartering of the Germans, whose country they were to have invaded themselves ten days since! It is a hard thing to be thus overrun. But the Germans are less harsh than might have been feared, when we think how angry they were three weeks ago!

From Nancy the same Correspondent wrote on the 19th of August, the day after the battle of Gravelotte:—

The battles of the 16th and of yesterday have produced a great change in the French position. From being merely weak and precarious, that position has become positively dangerous. On Tuesday the French troops were forced back from the southern road from Metz to Paris, and were compelled to maintain a doubtful struggle two days after for their only remaining road westward, that from Metz to Verdun in a slightly northerly curve. If what we now hear be true, you will have already learned by telegraph that the French right has been completely turned, and that the northern road to Paris is also thoroughly occupied by the Germans. Both the roads from Metz being cut by the Prussians, Paris is well nigh lost already. The National Guard can never cope with the Prussians in the field, and France has not enough of trained soldiers at once to equip another army. For these reasons I think that yesterday's battle has proved fatal to the Emperor's plan of defence. The battle of Tuesday, the 16th, was very bloody, and at one moment the French pressed hard upon their invaders. You will have heard of the splendid charge of Prussian light cavalry, which gave time for the 10th Corps to come up in support of the gallant fellows of the 3rd Corps, and of the capture of two or more French eagles towards the close of the day. That light cavalry charge of the Prussians was superior to our famous charge of Balaclava, inasmuch as it served the highest military purpose—the winning of a battle; and was superior to the French heavy

cavalry charge at Wörth, inasmuch as it was done with a chance of success. The French at Wörth threw away their cuirassiers like madmen, whilst the Prussians, in this battle of August 16, saved a *corps d'armée* by the heroic self-sacrifice of the light dragoon regiments, which dashed into the French line to gain time for the 10th Corps to come up. I hear that on the 16th and yesterday the French troops fought with desperate courage, and that on both days the Imperial Guard was under fire. But brave as were the men on one side, those on the other were their equals in courage, whilst they had better generalship to lead them to victory. The Prussians are resolved to conquer or die. Theirs is not a passing excitement, stirring the blood for a day, but the long-pondered determination of an earnest people. They have lost frightfully in these last battles. Thousands of German soldiers have been killed and wounded. Yet in the end of each fight they have pushed back the desperate Frenchman, and have carried out their generals' plans with admirable devotion. And now a word of the Third Army, commanded by the Crown Prince. While Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles have done so well on the right of the main French army, the Crown Prince has occupied a more and more threatening position on the right of the whole French position. Unless General de Failly can quickly muster a sufficient force to cover Central and Southern France, the Empire will be exposed to imminent danger in regions which are quite unprepared for defence. Once relieved from the possibility of a movement from the northward, the Crown Prince can do pretty much as he likes in other quarters. It cannot be denied that the smaller French fortresses are making a gallant resistance. Phalsburg has already become a great name in the war, on account of its holding out so obstinately; and Toul, the old cathedral town, the quietest, most unwarlike of bygone strongholds, has just been successfully repelling a somewhat serious attack. Toul lies westward of Nancy; and the Third Army, which is charged with clearing the country in that direction, has run foul of its ramparts. There seems to have been a mistake as to the condition of the place for defence, and yesterday morning's attack was met with great vigour by the French garrison. They did not venture on a sortie to follow up their advantage, but they inflicted a certain loss on the assailants, with, as far as we know, very little loss to themselves. The news has caused great joy in Nancy, where the people are disgusted by a military occupation, and burn to hear of French successes. I saw dozens of well-dressed young men crowding the road to Toul to gather any fresh scrap of information, and the peasants in

the wayside cottages were all curiosity to see the wounded pass. If a proper system of wholesale conscription had put all these city youths and curious peasants in the army or the Landwehr, France need not now have been in a state of anxious despondency. She has men enough, and to spare, but only three or four hundred thousand soldiers. Her National Guard is but a half-trained militia, whilst the Prussian Landwehr is as good as the Line. Even now the Landwehr is advancing in force to support the active army. It will besiege the fortresses, fill up the gaps in the line of defence, and hold the conquered provinces while the army goes on to Paris.

One must needs pity these conquered provinces. They do not suffer any of what are technically called "the horrors of war." Young girls stand at the cottage doors in the villages, or at the street corners in the towns, to see the soldiers pass, and are not injured by them. Shops are open in the towns and are not plundered; peaceable citizens go about their business without fear for life or limb. It is essentially a civilized war in these respects. But fruit and vegetables are taken along the wayside, horses are pressed into the service, soldiers are quartered on the people, and large supplies of food are demanded from the local authorities. My wish is to give you a true picture of what takes place, and neither to make much of the angry complaints which I hear from the French, nor to treat such complaints as lightly as the Germans are inclined to do. The fact is, that if we start with a notion of war founded on what the armies of the French Republic did to their enemies in 1795-6, this German invasion of France in 1870 will seem very civilized and merciful. If, on the contrary, we take our stand on the rights of private property and the highest English ideal of a "ready-money commissariat," there will seem to be something harsh and oppressive in the quartering of troops on the villagers. All foreigners have this notion, that troops should be quartered on the conquered people, who find their visitors in food. The luckless village which lies near the road is eaten up by thousands of unwelcome guests, and the more remote village escapes with a trifling loss. However, there is hope for the world, and progress even in the laws of war. This is a bitter time for the conquered French, and many individuals—farmers, horse-dealers, and wayside cottagers—suffer grievous loss. But when we compare it with the bad old wars of former days, we see that progress has been made.

The ancient city of Nancy is sad and gloomy; that is to say, the people of the city are sad. I cannot extend such a description to the mere outward appearance of the streets. True, the

shutters are closed in many of the shops, the hotels are almost empty, and the cafés in some quarters deserted. These things do not sound cheerful ; yet there is plenty of noise and bustle. Soldiers are here, there, and everywhere. Military convoys rumble through the streets, and orderlies with messages go clattering in and out of the gates. There is no lack of movement among the troops. One detachment is succeeded by another with the regularity of clockwork. The railway is to be used as far as practicable to lighten the traffic on the roads, and everything is to be pushed forward as though time were counted by hours and not by days. Well may the citizens stand with folded arms and stare gloomily at the passing regiments. Loud sound the drums and trumpets, heavy and steady is the tramp of the soldiers' feet. You look at them with wonder as part of an inexhaustible conjuring trick. Still more and more of them coming westward. "Alas !" cry the conquered people of Lorraine, "it is not an army, but a nation, which comes." Alas, indeed, for the wayside cottages, which will be burdened with constant billeting ; alas for the artisans in the towns, who earn so little in these troublous times, and must entertain military lodgers all the same ! I know that the French are to blame for the war, but I cannot help being sorry for the individuals who suffer so much loss and discomfort. They say that as mere lodgers, apart from the question of feeding them, the German troops behave quietly enough. They behave better to the French than the Turcos and Zouaves would have behaved to them in their German towns. No doubt they do. But what a long way off that other side of the picture seems, now that Germany has struck her blow !

Whilst there seemed a chance that Bazaine might gain a battle near Metz, that the desperate efforts of the Imperial Guard might turn the scale against the skill and spirit of the Prussians, it was necessary to hold the Third Army in readiness to march northward. Accordingly, while the battles of Vionville and Gravelotte were raging, the Third Army lay in the country about Nancy and Luneville, half expecting to be ordered up in support of the other German armies. When news of the defeat of the French by Steinmetz and Prince Frederick Charles arrived, the advance to Paris was resumed, though only for a time, as narrated in the following letter, from the Crown Prince's headquarters, dated Vaucouleurs, August 21 :—

The Third Army, which led off with such brilliant success in the beginning of the war, has been waiting impatiently for its turn to come again. It is an army which shows France a very

good picture of the united Germany that is arrayed against her. There are the sky-blue uniforms of the Bavarians, the darker colours of the Würtemberg and Baden troops, and the spiked helmets of the Prussians, mingled together in a common cause. All are full of zeal to distinguish themselves under the eyes of the Crown Prince, and all are impatient—in soldier-like fashion—to have as much fighting as possible. It has been the misfortune of France in this struggle to have been so much dreaded as a probable invader, that she herself has been invaded with the energy of a great patriotic movement on her enemy's part. The German soldiers are even now as anxious to fight at any cost, and as prodigal of their lives in battle, as though they were making a stand upon the Rhine.

The roads are crowded with trains of ammunition waggons, with stores of provisions, and with masses of infantry. Woe to the luckless wayside villages; woe to the farmers who have crops in wayside fields. There is no danger to life or limb among the peaceable inhabitants, but there is danger of being fairly eaten out of house and home. There is an unavoidable trampling down of crops in the fields where the soldiers pass, and there is such a demand for means of transport as leaves little chance to the farmer of keeping his horses for himself. He gets a receipt of some sort in most cases. But no amount of paper security will comfort the average French farmer in the present crisis. Poor man! it is such an unexpected blow. "Why does the Emperor make war," I have heard a dozen sad-looking men in blouses exclaim, "if he knows not how to make it?" A plébiscite in the occupied districts at this moment would need no foreign pressure to be flooded with "nons."

There is a straight and rapid march westward of the Third Army, supported by other troops. Without seeking to set forth the details of the movement in any manner that could help the other side, I may put it down that more than a hundred and fifty thousand men, full of confidence, flushed with victory, and splendidly organized, are about to beat up the quarters of the French. Three or four columns are marching abreast on some of the roads. Two go by the road itself, and in some cases two more move through the fields to right and left, or at least one other column makes a way which is a little out of order to serve the purpose of the moment. Great are the "blocks" and crushes, tremendous the swearing at critical corners. But, on the whole, it is remarkable how well these columns are directed; how carefully they choose their routes through the invaded provinces. Wheels are rumbling and whips are cracking along many a road. The columns are

halted to rest in some places, and there might be seen the bright bivouac fire twinkling in the fields, or long lines of horses standing silently at supper. Though many columns are halted, others are moving on. The road is still alive with military preparation. Do not fancy the pomp and circumstance of war as attending the march of the columns of supply. It is a pretty sight to see the Lancers or Dragoons who led the invasion trotting over hill and dale, with every nerve strained to detect a possible foe. There is an impressive force about the advance of the dusty and tired infantry—the murmur of many voices, and tramp of many feet passing forward like a storm sighing in the woods. Even the weight and slowness of the guns has its own peculiar dignity; they are deadly weapons in charge of determined fighting men. But the innumerable columns of supply, the baggage and ammunition, the food and provender, are very prosaic, though very necessary. There are miles of hay waggons—a good omen for cavalry horses. Farther on are other miles of bread waggons, of bacon and beef waggons. Horned cattle are led along by the score to become beef in due time; clothes and equipments, medicines and blankets, are brought rumbling on into France. If the people were astonished at the earlier stages of the journey, they are now simply bewildered beyond all power of recovery. An avalanche has fallen upon them.

One cannot see it for one's self, but the sight of the advancing host, as a wayside village sees it, from first to last, must be something to remember. The people will tell in a dreamy way how they heard that the Prussians were coming. There was news of them four, five, six days ago, as the case may be. Yes, *ma foi*, they heard that they were coming, but did not believe it. Then there was a party of Lancers seen upon the road. The people wondered what would happen. Monsieur le Curé told them that in modern wars they did not kill those who remained quiet, so their confidence was enough to keep them at home. The village shop was shut, and everybody closed his door and peeped from the window. Now the Lancers rode into the street, and a few came forward to the principal house—the Hotel de Ville—if the place ranked as a “bourg,” or small town. The soldiers asked for food and drink, said they would do no harm if they were not molested, and presently got off their horses. With details very slightly varying, I have heard of this first entry in several places, and have heard how infantry soon began to come: one regiment—two, three, a dozen regiments. The bread was eaten, the wine was drunk, and the people were well nigh ruined by feeding their guests. Were they bad fellows in

their way? A delicate question this, and one to which a stranger can expect but a guarded answer. What sort of fellows were they, these invading soldiers? "Oh, not very bad, if only they had not such dreadful appetites, and if they could make themselves understood." It is hard to be shaken and growled at in *La Belle France* itself for not speaking the language of the German Fatherland. It is harder still to have a slip of paper, negotiable Heaven knows when, instead of a good cart-horse or fat bullock. But the conquered people suffered far more in olden times. I feel sure that the French will be very angry and apt to magnify their ill-fortune, great as it is, and I think that the best thing which can be done is to state frankly the sort of injury endured by the peasants, the taking of cattle, and eating up of bread, whilst stating as frankly that I have heard no complaint of personal violence, and that the women do not seem at all afraid of the rough, loud-voiced fellows who swarm around them. The columns pour steadily on. We wonder what is being done for defence on the other side, and cannot but admire the little piece of defensive work which the garrison of Toul is doing close to us. Like Phalsburg, the city of Toul is a point of gallant resistance, but not in any way a rallying point for the surrounding people. The fortress is held, and the enemy passes on without troubling himself to take it. Both at Phalsburg and at Toul there has been an experimental attack, which has given the garrison an opportunity of distinction. I should add that the French authorities seem disposed to avoid unnecessary destruction of property by merely blowing up and knocking down to hinder the Germans. There are no traces of an attempt at *la petite guerre*, as far as I have yet seen. The French simply retreat clear out of reach when they do not mean to fight in earnest, and leave the open towns and villages to be quietly occupied by the advancing foe.

If the grim old Sieur de Vaucouleurs were again on earth, he would not be surprised at any amount of invasion. It was as natural in his day that France should be invaded as that the grapes and corn should ripen on the sunny hill-sides near his castle. But he had a distinct idea of what should be done under circumstances like the present. Invasion was to be met by vigorous resistance. The Sieur de Vaucouleurs would have ordered a *levée en masse* of the inhabitants, and allowed even women to fight. In the church of this little town is a painted window, put there centuries after, to record the giving of her sword to Joan of Arc. Over the Hotel de Ville is a statue of the Maid, and her fame is the great

souvenir of Vaucouleurs. It is a souvenir which bears on the actual state of things in France. Not that the French army has need of encouragement by an inspired heroine, but that everything must depend on whether France can trust her raw recruits, her National Guard, and her hasty levies of all kinds. The French army is fighting hard, as the terrible losses on both sides near Metz sufficiently prove. But the army alone is overmatched by the Germans. They, too, are fighting hard, are throwing away their lives with splendid bravery, and they can bring at least five trained men against three. So France must call out every citizen soldier, and must give each man the spirit of 1792, or of the old days of Joan of Arc, if she would avoid a heavy payment for her rash aggression. The Garde Mobile will have to bear its part in what is coming, and to meet, not a half-trained force like itself, but the best troops of Germany. There is a rapid concentration of troops, under the command of the Crown Prince, which threatens the road to Châlons; there is an ample force left to watch Metz; and there are masses of well-trained Landwehr men advancing by every road between the Rhine and the Meuse. Phalsburg will be left to the Landwehr to besiege, so will Bitsche, and probably Strasburg. The whole of the active army of Germany will be available to blockade Metz or capture Châlons. There is such bustle in the streets of Vaucouleurs that the younger portion of the inhabitants are very well amused in spite of their misgivings about the public safety. Boys and girls who are old enough to run about alone get into snug corners to feast their eyes on the horses and the uniforms. Especially do they like to gather near the quarters of the Prince, and observe from a little distance the Royal standard waving over the entrance, and the two soldiers in spiked helmets pacing up and down. It is no idle task that mounting guard at the Prince's door, for the number of officers who pass makes the duty one of constant saluting. The Germans neglect nothing on account of the war, but are established here as tranquilly as they might be at Berlin or Munich. I own that the crowd in proportion to the space would be appalling for a city in time of peace. But there is such order and regularity in the whole system, and the different functionaries settle so promptly into their new quarters, that they seem to have been here two months rather than two days.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM the 8th of August, when the disasters of Wörth and Forbach became known in Paris, until the 3rd of September, when the capitulation of Sedan became known, it was universally recognized that the Empire was on its last trial. By extraordinary achievements it might turn to profit this term of grace, but only some supereminent services could save it. The Palikao Ministry, which succeeded that of M. Emile Ollivier, was called into existence by the majority of the Legislative Body, in order to try whether this salvation was possible. During the three weeks of its existence, the merits of men and institutions were discussed in France with the utmost freedom. The criticisms of the old adversaries of the Empire grew more audacious; a few devoted Imperialists demanded that those who denied the military capacity of the Emperor should be tried by court-martial; but soldiers, like Count Palikao, knew that the times were not auspicious for *coups d'état*. The people demanded arms for the defence of the nation. The Government replied by calling up firemen from the country towns, forest-guards, gendarmes, to reinforce the garrison of Paris. But why should France, which for many years had appropriated immense sums to the maintenance of an army, find herself hard pressed for troops two weeks after the opening of the campaign? This question was much debated in France. A Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* thus reported a conversation which throws some light on this subject:—

I travelled from Paris to Boves with two rubicund cattle-dealers, who were returning home after having made good bargains in the threatened capital. They were stout, fair, florid men, with heavy whips, heavy jewellery, heavy purses, and evidently a capacity for heavy drinking. There was the bucolic heartiness in them; and we were soon deep in the war. One had sold three thousand sheep and sixty beasts in the Paris market. "They'll not die of hunger," he said. "The stock is becoming enormous. They may come to their last cartridge and their last man, but not to their last biscuit, nor their last *bouillon*."—"Nor their last bœuf," the other interrupted, pointing with his thumb at his friend, to convey to me the knowledge that there were more oxen in his meadows than had yet been driven out of them. "But, Monsieur, we have a revenge to take; and, the war ended, we shall take it," continued the vendor of 3,000 sheep to beleaguered Paris. "France

has been betrayed; France has been cheated. You remember that, fourteen or fifteen years ago, private officers, individual speculators, bought substitutes for the young men who were able to afford them. The price has risen since I drew lots, but this is not what we complain of. Everything has become dearer: human flesh, you see, as well as meat. Say the young man who has drawn an unlucky number doesn't wish to be a soldier. Well, his parents go to the Government office appointed within the last fifteen years for that purpose and pay, say, two thousand francs. Their dear boy is exonerated. Now, it is understood that with the two thousand francs a substitute, a *remplaçant*, shall be bought. This is the bargain between (1) the exonerated boy, (2) the Government, and (3) the nation."—" *Les voleurs!*" the cattle-dealer's friend interjected at this point.—"Well, what has been done? While the traffic in men was in the hands of private companies the Government took care to have their substitutes, since they had no interest in suppressing them. But, turned dealers themselves, their interest lay at once in a different direction. Well, they have just done this: taken the money from the pockets of families and put it into their own, and buttoned them carefully up. The substitute money has not bought a substitute. Just observe, Monsieur, the effect of this. The right number of men have been put upon paper. To the public, who knew nothing of the dishonest transaction, the companies of our regiments were a hundred strong; and consequently the regiments, they believed, had each 3,000 men under the flag. But what was the actual truth? Why, I can give you any number of instances where the actual available men were not more than thirty to the company. Regiments that upon paper were at their full strength would barely muster 1,800 fighting men, and some even less than this. This is our defeat! This is the key to the disasters which redden the brow of every Frenchman. *Les gredins!*" The speaker wrenched the end of his cigar off with his teeth, folded his arms, glared, first at me and then at his friend, and asked what form of cruel punishment was severe enough for the rascals who had sold the honour of their country in this way. "They will pay dearly," said the other. "What is the result to us? Why, ruin. In my *pays* no less than twenty-two beetroot mills were to have been set in motion this year. They are built, they are ready, but we have no workmen, and no coals. The young men who were exonerated, and who had drawn good numbers; who had, in short, settled to industrious lives, thinking that the State had no further military claims upon them, are drafted off, absolutely like *les moutons de monsieur!*"—"That is not

all," said the sheep-dealer. "What kind of vermin have we been entertaining for the last year or two? We have had Prussians in France—all over France—for a year or two, even in our brave Picardy. Imagine this. An elegant gentleman—a German—took up his residence in my neighbourhood some eighteen months since. He made the acquaintance of the great seigneur of the locality, was asked to the château, and made love to the seigneur's daughter, and was only waiting till she had passed her sixteenth year to be married to her. I tell you he was a very accomplished person, and among his accomplishments sketching held a foremost place. He sketched the whole country; he measured every road. We are brave people, and never suspected him for a moment. Well, on the day war was declared he decamped, and neither the seigneur nor his daughter has heard of him since. He was, *tout bonnement*, a Prussian spy. Well, that scoundrel does not raise our bile half so much as the rascals who have made us a hundred or two thousand of paper soldiers, and put the money that should have bought fighting men in their pockets. But they shall disgorge; and we shall hold them by the throat (the war over) until they have returned every *rouge liard*. The army know this, and in every regiment they are talking about it. It is the question that will be settled before any other directly we have got rid of the Prussians." The cattle-dealer's story has been repeated to me since by a military man, who had it direct from the Corps Législatif official. It is, indeed, the chief text of all military gossip.

In Paris the conviction was growing that France must save herself: and even before the Empire fell, the people, encouraged by General Trochu, Governor of the capital, were showing their desire to take up the work which was falling from the hands of their appointed military chiefs. In the middle of August, the Special Correspondent at Paris wrote:—

A spirit has sprung up which will render the war a war of patriotism. The word "peace" is the last word that will be listened to in Paris. The Parisians will fight first, and settle their domestic difficulties afterwards. I have talked to a varied set of residents on the subject, and I may say that, not day by day, but hour by hour, the determination to stand by Paris to the last becomes more intensified. But the people are pathetically ignorant of the situation of affairs outside the walls. They are driven to imagining all sorts of routes and strategical feats on the part of Bazaine and MacMahon. The cafés on the Boulevard des Italiens are crowded each evening with quidnuncs, who exchange specimens of the most profound

geographical ignorance with each other. I heard a gentleman who was enjoying that French beverage which, upon my word, I never saw a Frenchman taking before—a glass of cold water with a dash of sugar in it—bring a large group around his table by insisting that some Uhlans had got within the lines of the fortifications and had been captured. This, indeed, was an exceptional display of credulity, and was heard with numerous shrugs and interjections suggestive of disbelief. Spies and Uhlans are the ingredients with which most of the canards, or rather rocs, are stuffed.

I think by this time there ought to be provisions enough here to stand a very long siege indeed ; but the cattle still continue to arrive, and vast quantities of flour pass through the streets to the dépôts every hour. Wherever you move you come across carts piled with luggage, many of the household goods being exhibited with a candour and an absence of vanity almost primitive. The horses attached to the vehicles are sorry, hollow-backed jades of a Wouvermans colour, and with the patient manner of broken-spirited donkeys. The men in charge are dusty and travel-stained, and there is always a dog and a bird-cage amongst the effects. The children must, I imagine, have been imported into the city in another set of ambulances, as I have not seen them with the van.

At the Porte Saint Martin Theatre we had a “représentation patriotique au bénéfice des Francs-tireurs” last evening. The Francs-tireurs are a popular and picturesque corps. Their Parisian friends and relatives flocked to the performance, which comprehended a couple of speeches from the stage, by two deputies, M. Cremieux and M. Esquiros. The programme of the night was of an intensely warlike character. Every seat was taken, and there was quite a cerulean belt or sky-line of blouses in the region above the glowing pyramids of the gaselier. Prices for places, indeed, rose to famine or fever height, and at about ten o'clock no room could be had. The audience heard with admirable patience a trifling play which preceded the “conference” on “Rouget de l'Isle et la Marseillaise,” by M. Cremieux. The speaker made vigorous use of his text, and was listened to with the most profound attention and enthusiasm. His points were caught up instantly, and cheer after cheer greeted the bouquets of noble sentiments which he kept displaying, merely altering the arrangements, as it were, occasionally of the most familiar flowers of French rhetoric. He had by him the inevitable table and the glass of water, while in the background and at the side were standing hundreds of the Francs-tireurs, in whose interest the exhibition was promoted. The orator was vehement, almost wild, in gesticulation.

His voice ran through an octave of inflections; he wailed, he roared, he whispered, he nearly sang, he growled, he put on his tremolo stop; he seemed to pray, to weep, to denounce, and in every mood he was followed by the vast crowd, many of whose faces grew white with excitement and eager suspense. When he concludes the applause is deafening, there is a hoarse simultaneous roar from every side, and the Franks-tireurs rush forward to salute the worthy little gentleman, who seems not a whit the worse for his exhausting oration. He is summoned forth like a prima donna, to receive the compliment of a second reception. And now the "Marseillaise," embodied in the person of Mdlle. Agar, appears to give illustrative effect to the "conference." She is admirably fitted by nature and by art for the rôle. Her forehead is low and broad, her eyes black, her hair is dark and loose, her bare arms shapely, though somewhat muscular; she moves in a crouching, tiger-like attitude; she is hoarse, as though choking with passion. In a white dress, she stoops and glides to the footlights, and commences her chant as though she were a Brocken witch murmuring an unhallowed incantation. The blouses aloft are still as mice, a warning *hush-h* stifles a solitary chatterer in the stalls. Every line is dwelt on with an emphasis which would be grotesque in its exaggeration but for the terrible and oppressive earnestness with which each syllable is listened to. We come to a climax when the tricolour is unfurled, and Mademoiselle kneels down and the Franks-tireurs kneel also, and the audience rise. At the close of the song Mademoiselle is recalled, and is accompanied by a Franc-tireur, who holds her by the hand, with a bow sufficiently expressive of his and his comrades' resolve to live or die for the nation. Another warlike solo is delivered by a gentleman who is a trifle too fat to produce unmixed emotions, and whose rotund build is rendered over-palpable by a pair of yellow tight drawers worn below a short jacket. We have a tender ditty by a young lady and gentleman, who quaver and quiver in that sigh-away, die-away fashion which belongs to the school of French drawing-room music, corresponding with our own boudoir ballads of amorous desolation and despair, necessitating the expression of a desire to be a bird or a butterfly. A piece of declamation by Mdlle. Agar on "Liberté," and we conclude with "Le Chœur des Enfants du Lutèce, par tous les Artistes de la Porte St. Martin." During an interval there was a collection for the Franks-tireurs. Ladies and gentlemen assisted in sending round the hat. I witnessed an agreeable incident during this ceremony. A young officer was seated next a very pretty girl, and one of his superiors having to cross where he was, I observed the

latter shake his head at him and point to a sword, which I presumed the other had not permission to wear in public. The young fellow immediately unbuckled his belt and handed the weapon to his chief, who, after apparently addressing a remonstrance to him, turned with a smile to the lady, and gave the sword into her custody. When I was leaving the theatre I perceived that the Franes-tireurs had already provided themselves with a daughter of the regiment. The vivandière was youthful and comely, albeit Rubenesque in proportions. She was surrounded by an admiring and respectful crowd, and did not appear in the least embarrassed by the curiosity she evidently excited. I should back her in a bout of fisticuffs against four at least of her male body-guards, though her mild blue eyes would seem to warrant her free from a disposition to blacken those of any one else.

The younger the soldier, the more thoroughly he takes to the trade. If I have seen two drill detachments, I have seen a score, in the best of spirits, following the tuck-tuck and rattle of the monotonous drum, and bearing their kits on their backs and a yard or so of bread. One entire brigade seemed to be armed with nothing more destructive than tin pots and kettles for cooking. The streets are perpetually traversed by waggons freighted with flour. Along the Boulevard you see the red trousers everywhere. When a pair of comrades settle at a little marble slab they are instantly surrounded by waiters, with whom they shake hands, and to whom they exhibit their garb and accoutrements, with the vanity of a belle turning herself round and round to her maid-servants when she has put on her war-paint and her spangles for a *soirée dansante*. The waiters fold their arms and adopt military attitudes, while the recruits relate their experiences, which may include a period of three or four days. They drink a glass of beer and tender payment, but the dame at the counter inside signals that the refreshment is to be an act of unregistered hospitality. It is pleasant to observe the natural and self-respecting etiquette with which our recruits acknowledge the good-nature of their entertainers, and the easy mode in which they and the waiters all bow to each other. I am afraid our countrymen under the same circumstances would behave much as a bear does when you give him a bun. By the way, I have seen Turcos, or what I believe to be such; and it strikes me, if I can be permitted to draw a conclusion from slight data, that these imported forces are not universally the Sawney Beans that we have been told they were. Perhaps, however, French Turcos are now being manufactured to replace those cut off by the needle-guns of the Prussians. At any rate, the turbaned group that I met

to-day were as mild in demeanour and in visage as orthodox curates. Judging from the gusto with which they fell upon rolls of bread and cups of coffee, I am inclined to think that their palates have never been stimulated by unhallowed meats.

Preparations for a siege began in earnest, even while Mac-Mahon was leading his Army of the North to rescue Bazaine. Late in August the Special Correspondent just quoted wrote:—

The Napoleonic pillar in the Place Vendôme, the Bridge of Jena, and the Arch of Triumph—such are the sacrifices the terrible Prussians are certain to demand. These glorious trophies rangle—so runs the story—in the German heart, and the cry “to Paris” is prompted by a fierce desire to destroy the monuments of past victory and defeat. But they shall stand, look you, until long after the present march on Paris has been forgotten, and our grandchildren’s grandchildren shall talk of the honours gained by Paris at bay. To the Arch of Triumph first. What do you see on the way? What do you see amid the trees of Boulogne and the plain of Longchamps? What on the long road of the Elysian Fields, and on the diverging highways to the west, south, and north? Carriages, vans, waggons, carts, wheelbarrows, trays on wheels, all laden with household goods, all accompanied by their homeless owners, all testifying to the reality of the defence Paris is prepared to make. You meet the stream at the Madeleine, and it is all but unbroken during a two hours’ drive. A long Normandy cart, drawn by clumsy broad-backed farm-house steeds, who neigh and caper at city sights and sounds—a cart laden with human freight as well as with beds and bedding, chairs, tables faded bits of work in Berlin wool framed and glazed, a bird-cage or two, and a pet dog, meets you first. An old crone is perched at a dangerous height on a paillasse of blue and white, little children cling to the dusty shafts, while men and women are walking in a melancholy procession at its side. Then a private omnibus with a coronet on its varnished sides, its windows down, and its blinds drawn, but with rare old china monsters peeping from its half-open door, and a jumble of ormolu, statuettes, bronzes, cabinet pictures, and ornate time-pieces presenting itself within. An open cab with a pyramid of bonnet-boxes and feminine trunks, in the midst of which a vestal of sour exterior is squatted; a barouche and pair, on the seats of which are dressing-cases, and a gilt cage with a squalling macaw; two vans, containing between them the furniture of a good-sized house; a ramshackle nondescript on wheels drawn by a mule, and with the heterogeneous contents of a broker’s shop emptied into it, in as much confusion as if

they had been shaken from a pepper-castor by giant hands; a little crowd on foot, which is like a funeral, save that the bearers are in blue linen instead of black cloth, and that they surround a brightly polished mahogany wardrobe instead of a coffin, meet the eye in succession. It is the flight into Paris. The houses for miles round the fortifications are deserted, and their recent occupants are flocking within the walls by the hundred with their chattels and their families, there to await the result of the enemy's advance. It seems a peculiar mode of preparing for a siege, this accumulation in the threatened city of useless mouths; but they feel safer, these poor people, to be at the capital than to retreat into the provinces, and the Government has not hitherto said them nay. Down the main avenue of the Elysian Fields, past the Arch of Triumph, on the summit of which there are soldiers taking observations, and a crane and a movable platform mysteriously at work; along the roads skirted by the cottages with double coach-houses, by the wicked little architectural prettinesses in stucco, from whose gates dainty white poodles with pink collars are wont to peep, and by the pretentious villas of detached gentility, and we are at the gates of the famous Bois. Nothing but families moving, and closed houses all the way. Let the reader recall the time when he suffered last from the horrors of "a move," and then let him multiply the vehicles containing his household goods until they cover three miles of ground, and he will realize what has taken place for the last forty-eight hours at the outskirts of, and the main roads into, Paris. It is only when we are through the first line of fortifications that the houses are closed. Within this limit the various shops are rather busier than usual. You must eat and drink, however great your distress, and on the sad day when the best and most beloved among us departs this life, the cook will assuredly take her orders for dinner exactly as if the mournful event had not occurred. So the eating-houses and wine-shops are driving a roaring trade by reason of the extra traffic, and the heads of small households, and the owners of deserted farms, chat together not uncheerfully over the refreshing glass. They talk of the fineness of the weather for their job, and the heaviness of the roads. It is impossible to be dying for your country all day long, and the necessity for a removal, and its distressing inconvenience and loss, having been once admitted, there is no philosophy in railing at the Prussians instead of getting out of their way. The tradespeople near the barriers are as chirpy as possible. A small fat *flâneur* discourses on the absurdity of supposing that the Prussians will come, or that they are such fools, and then, biding his stomach at the con-

vulsing excellence of the jest, asks if we have seen the cattle and sheep in the gardens of the Bois? "There are more thousands of them than I can count; there is enough meat for all of us for two months; there is no bit of ground in the whole place which has not its beasts feeding. It is droll this, it is droll. Look at them; thus they come still, the carriages with the women, the children, and the men, the beds and the chairs, and all to ask Paris to protect them—my faith, from what?" The little man blows away some snuff from his forefinger with great contempt, and having thus disposed of the enemy satisfactorily, turns to his quips and jests again, to the puzzlement and dismay of his listeners, who are half persuaded that they have taken fright too soon. It is as well for that merry little man that he is not within earshot of the people who suspect and denounce, or his merriment might take the incongruous form of a mingled prayer for mercy and a pitiful avowal that he is French to the heart's core, and hates Prussia with all his might.

We have been indebted to a block of half an hour at the fortifications gate for this conversation. The trench round the works has been deepened, and the opening in the walls closed up, all but a narrow space which a single line of vehicles can pass. At our arrival it is the turn of those coming in, and our carriage is stopped amid a mass of others. There are enormous waggon-loads of hay, bound for the outlying forts, soldiers on horseback, gendarmes, commissariat waggons, and a field-piece or two waiting with us. At a given signal from a sergent de ville, the tide of arrival is turned, and we who are waiting are permitted egress. There are looks of curious scrutiny as we pass the fortification walls, and the odd-looking men whose cab has kept close by ours ever since we made for the Bois draw closer. But we neither put questions nor make a parade of observation, and when our drive brings us to the iron gates of the noble enclosure we ask indifferently of the men on guard there if it is still allowed to drive in the Bois, and are at once admitted. The woods and gardens, the racecourse at Longchamps, and the meadows around it present an extraordinary spectacle. Horned animals tear down the boughs of trees, and munch up choice leaves and flowers, and roll massively over parterre and shrub, reckless of consequences, and as if asking each other what the deuce this unwonted liberty can mean. Twenty-seven thousand head of cattle make a pretty show in a wood, the boughs and leafy shadows of which have an oddly magnifying effect. Turn which way we would, there were gigantic animals tearing at the trees, or browsing peacefully at their feet, and the effect

was exactly as if they were in a state of nature. The sheep were less picturesque, but quite as extraordinary. There seemed miles of them. The plain of the racecourse was like a field of waving corn from the mass of moving yellow wool with which it was covered, and now and again when the thick foliage broke, and we came to open meadows full of cattle, it was exactly as if a boldly-mottled mass of red and white marble had been enclosed. The dun, red, and white of the cattle were amalgamated, and they were so closely packed that it seemed as if you could walk upon their backs as on a level floor. So all through the avenues in which the beauty, the fashion, and the frivolity of the world have forgathered these many years. Beasts rambling among the trees and flowers, soldiers in uniform washing their feet in the lake of the cascade, and other soldiers defiling up the walks and groves, and that was all. It was not merely that the customary flirtations, costumes, and equipages were wanting. There was complete solitude, save for the things described. Our carriage was the only one to be seen, and the people at the café by the cascade resented as an outrage our request for breakfast. A waiter stood at the door, napkin in hand, the little tables had glass and snowy linen, and there were attendants behind the counter. But it was all phantom-like and ghostly. They were bewildered, stunned, appalled at the prospect before them and the sights at their door, and the waiter ran away the instant we addressed him. On the patch of green in front of the café, from which a Clothilde and Thérèse have flaunted and ogled for many a season, a poor sheep lay dying; the tramp of common soldiers resounded in the favourite walks of the Arcadian exquisites of the Second Empire; and the line of fortifications just visible in the distance, instead of contributing an ornamental adjunct to the landscape, has had its archways turned into storehouses for grain. The stream of carts and carriages laden with families and furniture was as thick as ever on our return, and the number of "useless mouths" which have entered Paris since yesterday morning must be immense. On the other hand, twenty thousand souls have left it in the same time, and the railway stations are blocked up by the anxious people who are burning to be off. Deserted houses for miles round the city, and deserted houses by the thousand within it; citizens vowing that they will never desert the entrenchments, and that they will die rather than the Prussians shall enter the capital; preparations for a siege, which is calmly anticipated as of two months' duration, and so announced in the journals of the day; wayfarers, with determined faces, telling each other of the latest order as to the expulsion of the Germans,

and of their own determination to fight to the last—this is Paris. This driving in of cattle, this storing of food, and this clustering together of poor families eager for protection, gives a strange vividness to the preparations for armed defence, and makes us feel in a state of siege indeed.

Just after the battle of Vionville the following letter was written by the Special Correspondent at Paris:—

Marshal Bazainé's "victory" did not at first alter the face of Paris a jot. I was sitting outside the Café Americain half an hour after midnight this morning, when an animated gentleman alighted from a cab, and burst upon us with the news. He had seen it at the Minister's. He knew it to be true. It was a great, an enormous victory, with thousands of Prussians slain, and thousands more wounded on the field. The young men in uniform and the male and female loungers, clustered round him on the instant, and immediately began to cavil. "It is not official."—"How do we know it to be a victory?"—"Why is not the despatch up at the Mairie?" were the only expressions vouchsafed, and neither belief in the news, nor gratitude to the newsmonger, was visible. It was quite in vain that our informant protested and pledged himself. A tall cynic in a white hat shrugged his shoulders and said but "no" after each asseveration, and the crowd leaned to scepticism rather than faith. A little later, and the despatch was put up at the Mairie in the Rue Drouot and other places, and a vast assemblage discussed it publicly. The absence of rejoicing was very remarkable. I suppose it would have been too much to have looked for a cheer, but the clapping of hands lacked heartiness, and men began to argue as to the truth and scope of the intelligence almost in the same breath as that in which they read it out. The news soon spread. But in every case doubt and disputation went hand in hand with its receipt, and it really seemed as if the city could not bring itself to believe that it had occasion to rejoice.

The mothers, the sisters, the wives, the affianced of the gallant young spirits who have donned their uniforms and marched so blithely to the battle, how do these bear up in their day of heavy trial? Come with me to the Church of our Lady of Victory, and you shall see them humble, devout, patient, praying for their dear ones, and registering their vows before Heaven. The whole church is full of memorials from those who have suffered and have prayed, whose hearts' hunger has been mercifully satisfied, and who have inscribed their gratitude on the sacred walls. I was at this church on the Napoleon Fête-day, and again this morning. It had many worshippers

on both occasions, tearful women wrapt in prayer for the most part, with here and there a priest and an aged man. "In gratitude to Our Lady for preserving a darling child when in great peril;" and then come initials and the date. "In humble thankfulness for the return of my beloved husband from the war;" "Honour to Our Lady for her merciful intervention," on a day named; "In acknowledgment of the prayer of Our Lady answered," and so forth, cover a great part of the interior of the church. Each sentiment is graven on a small marble tablet some eight inches by four, and affixed to the walls, or the pillars overhead, so that the place is lined with the records of gratitude. Several of these are too minutely personal for quotation, but all breathe the same spirit, and all helped to give a tender meaning to the bowed figures absorbed in prayer. There were lighted candles and pictures, an officiating priest in vestments, and glittering altar ornaments, and votive offerings. But you hardly see these. The poor women and their sorrows shut them out. Theirs are the passionate cravings for more than human help; the pitiful longing for other and more personal solace than the most brilliant national victory could give; the humble shrinking domestic hopes and fears which centre upon Jules or Antoine, his safety and his life. He is perhaps lying stiff and stark with a Prussian bullet through his head even as they pray, but they are upheld, poor souls, by love and faith; they deposit their little gifts in one of the bags held by ladies at the church doors, and go their way serene and comforted. The tumbrils yesterday for the men about to be wounded, and the church in which prayers for soldiers' safety are being offered up to-day—it is hard to say which was sadder. There were no heroines present, and I did not see a single worshipper who seemed capable of playing the Roman. It was all humility and timid hope; and when one looked round next at the vacant places for the tablets of gratitude, it was with strengthened convictions concerning the horrible barbarism, the relentless wickedness of war.

The shopkeeping interests are suffering terribly from the state of siege. There are no tourists to buy pretty trifles at exorbitant prices. The Rue de Rivoli, the Rue de la Paix, the Rue Royale, and the Rue Castiglione are monuments of emptiness. You pass shop after shop at what used to be the busiest hours in the day, to find Mr. the Proprietor in solitary dignity, on one of his customer's chairs, or Mr. the Shopwalker looking disconsolately from the door. In no case are customers to be seen. The establishment of the great Worth had not a single carriage before it this afternoon, and the jewellers, the bric-à-brac vendors, the milliners, were living in hermit-like retire-

ment behind their wares, and came forth lugubriously, but with feverish briskness, if your shadow so much as fell across their thresholds. Let affairs progress in their present direction, and it will be worth a resolute and courageous bargain-hunter's while to run all risks and to come over. "There is no money," the traders say; "we have good reason for wishing to reduce our stock. You shall have this picture or that gem at half—at half do I say?—at your own price. What think you of this as a season for travellers? one had far better shut up and go to the frontier!" Then come bitter imprecations upon the "light-heartedness" with which this paralyzing war was entered upon, and dismal stories of the impossibility of a commercial rebound for many a long month to come. This is a prosaic side of the national calamity, but is very real and very apparent. People have something else to think of besides shopping, and it is, moreover, held to be rather against you to be possessed of the wherewithal for purchases. A portly Frenchman found this out the other day. He seemed to uninitiated eyes a true Parisian, and his patent boots, broad-tailed cutaway coat, tight girths, and general suggestiveness of straps, pads, and buckles under his clothes, together with the pretty toy-dog carried by the lady at his side, certainly placed his nationality beyond doubt. Yet his appearance and conduct were declared to be gravely suspicious when he tendered a thousand-franc note and asked for change, after taking some refreshment. In less than two minutes he found himself the centre of an unpleasantly animated crowd. How came he with so much money on his person? What account could he render of himself? From the provinces—a merchant? His name, his age, his papers? He was not ill-treated, for he was able to satisfy his querists; but he and the lady with him spent a marvellously uncomfortable quarter of an hour, and when he was suffered to depart there was quite a debate concerning the probability of his having come honestly by the note, and whether it might not have come from Prussia. The preposterous unreason of this thesis struck no one. The garçon was seen to go for the landlord, and the landlord was observed with two other garçons to advance to the stranger. After this, those sitting near the latter were on their feet upon the instant, volunteering opinions and advice. Then the next rank of customers advanced, and the next, and the next, until the poor man was like St. Paul at Ephesus, or the "too daring" Hector of Troy. It is melancholy to add that his lady companion turned against him too, and with an "I told you so" expression rated him soundly for his folly in not bringing out small change, and so saving her from the annoyance his thoughtless conduct had brought

about. Altogether that middle-aged French dandy had a bad time, and when he hailed a cab and drove off, it was with the cowed look of a man who has been found not guilty, but recommended not to commit the offence again.

The mania for finding spies everywhere was greatly encouraged by the ridiculous stories published in the newspapers. It was related how a man, who was vending a halfpenny "true and correct life of the brave General Uhrich, the defender of Strasburg," turned out to be a Prussian, and how a Berliner had gone up and down Paris for a fortnight taking note of every new-built work or palisade in the guise of a French officer. An adventure with a professional denouncer of spies was described in the following letter from the Special Correspondent at Paris:—

Messieurs les Mouchards have turned me out of my hotel. Not violently, but with a gentle and consistent pressure more effective than violence. They "wanted to know" about me. They followed me through the town. When I dined, one of them turned up at an adjoining table. When I drove, another of them was seized with a passion for taking the air. When I loitered at shop windows, they loitered too; when I called on friends, they stood obligingly at the corner of the street. When I was busy with my letters, they held conferences as to what I could possibly have to write about. All this was because the Prussian landlord had seemed glad to see me when I arrived three days since. This horribly suspicious circumstance appears to have given the authorities great anxiety; and when I learnt that, in addition to their flattering personal attentions, they were curious as to my correspondence, and as to the particular post-office through which it was sent, I resolved to move. "Your letters won't leave this country without being read by the Government," remarked the German *valet de place* whom I had engaged on the recommendation of my Prussian landlord. "Ask the gentleman you serve, they say to me—the gentleman who writes—whether you will have to leave France or not. He knows all about it—pah! why do you pretend? He knows—we tell you, he knows. The French *garçon*, sir, who looks to your room, is, I believe, a *mouchard*; there is another *mouchard* on the steps of the hotel; and see! over there by the book-shop window, that fat man in black, with the white face, he is a *mouchard* too, and will keep opposite this house till you go out." But all this was as nothing to my latest experience. I have now left the Prussian's hotel thirty-six hours; but on calling there this morning for my letters, I found to my amazement the same fat man standing at the same book-shop window. Our eyes met as I left the hotel, and as I made my way down to

the Paris fruit market he followed me. Once at the latter, I halted. So did the *mouchard*, and I had now an opportunity of examining him well. A man of thirty-five or so, with that premature tendency to stomach which a diet of sugar and grease gives—a man dressed in black, with a good deal of shirt-front sticking out at the breast, like the feathers of a pouter pigeon, and with a curly-brimmed hat, and gloves, forsooth (gloves of the kind called “Berlin,” doubtless to blind me, the Prussian), and, joy of joys, with tender feet! I knew this by his boots, which were creasy, large, and splay-footed, as full of marks and lines as an outline map of Europe, and with a Black Sea in the shape of a neat hole over the toe of the right one, nicely filled out with black silk. It was clear he did not wish to speak with or denounce me, or he would have done it now. It was clear, too, he meant to keep me in sight. So, always with an eye to the condition of his feet, I resolved to lead that *mouchard* a dance. I had had the best of the situation so far; for, whereas I ate delicious peaches, and figs worthy of Jersey, he, poor fellow, had contented himself with cheapening grapes of a peculiarly mouldy character. The morning was agreeable, and I was lightly clad, so, after eating my last peach with great deliberation, washing my hands at the market fountain, and figuratively girding up my loins, I started for a constitutional round the Parc de Monceaux. The day was before me, you understand, and a good four-miles-an-hour walk was rather agreeable than otherwise. Off we started, therefore—I and my police shadow—I keeping up a steady heel-and-toe pace, he shambling painfully, but beating me by knowledge of the road, and by artfully availing himself of short cuts. To do him justice, he stuck to his work bravely. Twenty times in the course of that two hours’ ramble did I think I had shaken him off, and twenty times did he come up smiling, though considerably the worse for wear. He puffed like a steam-engine out of order. His feet bothered him, and I was puzzled that he did not hire a cab. Could it be that “payment by results” is the system in vogue here, and that without a conviction his expenses would not be allowed? He became a touching spectacle at last, perspiring, uneasy, almost groaning. Still he kept on my trail doggedly. Never say there is no perseverance in the French character. This fat knave has eradicated that theory from my mind for ever. I tried hard to walk him out. Round by the Panthéon, past the Elysée, where the old soldiers were being enrolled as volunteers by the hundred, and where there was a considerable crowd, but where he neither lingered nor spoke, down by the fruit markets again, and so to Notre Dame. For I had determined to mount the towers of that

venerable edifice, and to give my *mouchard* a final breather up the stone steps. He threw up the sponge at the narrow doorway leading to the towers, sat down breathlessly on the steps of the Hôtel Dieu, and left me to make the ascent alone. You don't, of course, go through this kind of amusement without warming to the work, as it were. I had my pockets full of the English newspapers of yesterday, a pipe (of which more anon), lights, and a good supply of tobacco. So I climbed to the topmost height, selected a snug corner out of the wind, and composed myself for a long stay. I found the newspapers interesting, and the tobacco delicious. The guardian of the place leaves you after showing the bells on the story below, and retires to his rabbit-hutch on the roof while you pant up the remaining flight of stone steps alone. There was something so exceedingly comic in the situation that I got almost to pity my pursuer, as I pictured him nursing his poor swollen feet below, while I enjoyed the magnificent panorama and listened philosophically to the war-sounds of the city.

The whole thing seemed so childishly unreal. Yonder drab strip is, I suppose, a road. Those blue toy figures, about the size of one's thumb, and with a tiny map-flag in their midst, who are being pushed along it in compact masses, as if by some clever mechanism, are a regiment of soldiers *en route* for the field. The pigmies in blouses on the opposite side of the Seine, whose chant of the "Marseillaise" comes up clear and strong to my perch, are conscripts. Those stumpy brown cigars being dragged along by white and brown insects, are casks of wine by the waggonful; the black pins with white heads which perambulate the green pocket-handkerchief with brown stripes immediately below me, are convalescents in the gardens of the Hôtel Dieu; and yonder doll's chapel on the baby bridge, with male and female worshippers constantly going in and out, is the Morgue. I have finished my newspapers by this time, and have spent an hour and a quarter on the tower. I descend to find my *mouchard* still in waiting. He looks surprised to see me, much as if he had determined that I had taken up a permanent residence in the Sebastopol bell there, to concoct conspiracies against the State. I make for the Morgue at a brisk pace; he keeps on the bridge while I enter, is gone when I leave it, and I have not seen him since. Let us hope that his report to-day will make an instructive addition to the police archives.

I had heard that there had been thrice the number of suicides in Paris since the war than previously, but the statement was not borne out by what I saw in the city's dead-house. A decent-looking woman of fifty, in a white Normandy cap, and holding

her son, a lad of ten, by the hand, expressed this tersely, and with a great air of disappointment—"There is nothing new." She remarked, the instant she passed the doorway, "He was here yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that. Come, my child, let us not stay." "He" was a man of sixty, with an iron-grey beard, shrunken limbs, and a careworn pinched-up face, out of which Death itself had not been able to smooth away the wrinkles and crow's-feet, each of which told its story of sordid suffering. "He" had died or killed himself, when in bitter penury, as the rags hanging over his head for identification showed. As the water fell drip, drip, on the rigid mask of clay, and the shouts of the tipsy patriots floated in, its late owner seemed far removed indeed from war and political crises, their fever and their turmoil. As for me, I remembered Eöthen, and thought the old man well out of the scrape of being alive and poor. This dead pauper is merely a parenthesis, however. The event of the morning was the *mouchard* and his stern chase. I have taken the opinion of experienced friends since my return, and it is agreed that incidents like these are part of the programme in a state of siege, that it is no more than any foreigner is liable to, be he English or otherwise, and that nothing can be done, unless one is annoyed by some overt act.

The city has been far quieter for the last two days (August 14 and 15). It is unnecessary to add that this surface-calm does not imply content. Such violent fevers as Paris was suffering from at the beginning of the week are the more dangerous when they strike inwards, and there are ample indications that public feeling is suppressed, not allayed. The wildest stories are abroad. Last night, when the Marines—whose loyalty to the Empire is supposed to have been kept fresh in a saline atmosphere—were marched down the Boulevards on their way to the field, they were followed by the acclamations of thousands. Bouquets were fixed to muskets and carried in triumph. One old gentleman, with a red ribbon in his button-hole, distributed largesse, standing up in his carriage and constantly bringing silver from an apparently inexhaustible canvas bag. But the cries were *Vive les Marins ! Vive les Parisiens !* and occasionally *Vive la Guerre !* As for the Emperor, none were so poor as to do him reverence—no man cried, "God bless him !" In one of the recent telegraphic despatches from the seat of war, it was said that rain was falling heavily at Metz, and the Marines were asked jestingly if they could teach the generals to fight without umbrellas. A good many of the gallant fellows were drunk, and the large loaves of coarse bread were stuck on their rifles as if the latter were toasting-forks,

and so waved in triumph at the bystanders. All these uncovered to the Marines, and the latter brandished their arms, stopped to shake hands with, and in some instances kiss, perfect strangers in a free-and-easy fashion, such as would turn an English disciplinarian's brain. Sitting outside the Café de la Paix yesterday, a lad of twenty, in uniform, and with a most doleful face, came up with a handsomely-coloured meerschaum and a sad story. It was his brother's pipe. It had been his brother's pride to watch its progress, and to show to an admiring circle how its white gave way to a creamy yellow, its yellow to a delicate chocolate, and its chocolate to a rich brown. But this brother went to the wars, and left the pipe in the speaker's hands, charging him solemnly to smoke slowly, and to preserve and foster the pipe's growing beauties, against its owner's return. Now the brother is dead, and the holder of the pipe had been "drawn." He was starting for Châlons that night. He was afraid of taking so fine a pipe with him. He would dread its falling into the hands of the Prussians, it might be taken from him on the field, and would the gentlemen buy it at their own price? Need I add that it changed hands, and that the poor lad in uniform went on his way, not rejoicing—he was too profoundly dejected for that—but with one of his cares assuaged. The damaging stories mentioned in my last are repeated everywhere. The malversation of stores, the rottenness of the Administration, the incompetence of the Emperor to lead armies or to continue personal government, are all accepted as foregone conclusions, and it really seems as if very few people indeed believe that there will be any serious attempt to continue or prolong the old state of affairs. All this can wait, they say. Give us news of the war. Let us be satisfied that Paris is safe, and that France's honour can be redeemed, and we can settle such a minor matter as our next form of Government later. Meanwhile, strenuous efforts are, it is said, being made to repair the condition of the army, its equipment, and commissariat, and every day's delay before the next great battle is said to be worth twenty thousand men to France. The actual state of affairs in Paris may be inferred from my personal experience this morning, as well as from the facts that the fair city is almost surprisingly peaceable and quiet; and that I saw the sergents de ville disperse two crowds last night without opposition or difficulty. They left several other street assemblages untouched, but three days ago they seemed to have abnegated their functions and never to interfere at all.

A word concerning the "Marseillaise." It has lost its effect. I have heard it sung at two different places of public entertainment with all the pomp and circumstance which good

singing, good acting, good music, and abundant banners and supernumeraries could give to it, and it fell as flatly as a bad sermon. In the first instance there were three singers on the stage, the chief of whom was dressed as one of the soldiers of the Revolution of '93, cocked hat, red lappels, and sword complete. He waved a tricoloured banner, and sang, and knelt, and invoked with admirable enthusiasm. His companions, one in the uniform of a Chasseur de Vincennes, and the other a youth in the Garde Mobile dress of to-day, also waved tricoloured flags, and knelt, and made the solemnly patriotic appeals which three short weeks ago stirred the average Frenchman into frenzy. But it was like whipping a dead horse. The audience seemed dead or stunned, and sipped their liquor calmly, or chatted in under tones, as if they thought the great national song were *malapropos*, or as if they had not the heart to join in it under present circumstances. This was at the Café des Ambassadeurs, in the Champs Elysées, where the "Marseillaise" is put forward as one of the attractions of the evening, the hour at which it is sung advertised beforehand, and the people supposed to flock to hear it with all their might. The Alcazar d'Été is but a stone's throw from it, and gives its version of the "Marseillaise" with even greater elaboration. There are some fifty singers on the stage, men dressed in most revolutionary blouses and armed with guns and bayonets, women dressed as street lads waving tricoloured banners, and women as patriotic heroines with not much dress to speak of. These joined in the great chorus, and tried hard to stir the hearts of their auditors. All in vain. The seats at each place were only a fourth filled, and the people occupying them seemed half asleep. One stout gentleman essayed to lead a chorus, but the attempt was a failure, and as he subsided into hiccups before the song was over, his enthusiasm was neither effective nor contagious.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Emperor could not return to Paris, leaving Bazaine shut up in Metz. *That* had been explicitly announced to him by his Ministers and his consort as soon as he had disclosed an inclination to resume in the capital the duties of the position in which he had so lately been confirmed by the nation. More than that, the army of MacMahon must not remain at Châlons, but must proceed to succour Marshal Bazaine. MacMahon remonstrated. The movement upon Metz he declared would be a measure of the "greatest imprudence," and he was not willing to expose troops, still imperfectly organized, in making an extremely perilous

flank march in the face of an enemy very superior in point of numbers. He announced, accordingly, that he was going to make his way towards Rheims, whence he could proceed either to Soissons or to Paris. "It is only," said he, "under the walls of the capital that my army, when rested and reconstituted, will be able to offer the enemy any serious resistance." In pursuance of this resolution, the army was led towards Rheims on the 21st, and took up its position behind that city. "But the language of reason"—the Emperor subsequently complained—"was not understood in Paris; it was wished, at all hazards, to give public opinion the empty hope that Marshal Bazaine could still be succoured, and the Duke of Magenta received from the Council of Ministers, to which had been joined the Privy Council and the Presidents of the two Chambers, a most pressing injunction to march towards Metz." The army which was thus embarked on a highly perilous enterprise was made up of the most various elements. Its nucleus was formed of the remains of MacMahon's First Corps—veterans who had fought in Africa, and were assumed to be the very flower of the French army; yet their chief has since told us that they were "discouraged and mutinous," and the effects of their dire example were feared. The Fifth Corps, that of De Failly, had lost its baggage in a long retreat, without having once met the enemy. Douay's Seventh Corps "did not show so much solidity as might have been desired." The Twelfth, a new Army Corps, was composed of three divisions—the first formed of new regiments, the second made up of "marching regiments" out of "fourth battalions," and the third of Marines. Obeying the orders which he had deprecated, MacMahon led his army, on the 23rd, from Rheims, intending to march to Betheniville, on the Suippe. Its departure from the former city was marked by deplorable excesses. The soldiers, neither attached to their officers by respect, nor fairly subjected to them by discipline, plundered the provision and other trains in the most open manner, and, worst of all, their superiors were afraid to take notice of their disgraceful conduct. Scarcely had MacMahon left Rheims when want of necessities compelled him to return to the railway, and he reached Rethel on the 24th, from the sheer necessity of obtaining subsistence for his men. At Rethel, the road to be taken to Metz must be definitely chosen and boldly pursued.

The Prussian commander had taken precautions for every contingency. His own arrangements had primarily in view a march upon Châlons and Paris, to be prosecuted by two armies, while Metz was to be guarded by the united forces of two others. The Crown Prince of Prussia was to resume his suspended march along the great road from Nancy to Châlons. It was possible,

however, that MacMahon might take up a defensive position to the north of Châlons. To meet such a contingency, a Fourth Army was formed of the Prussian Guards, the 12th and 4th Corps—in all 80,000—and placed under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony. On the 22nd, four days after the battle of Gravelotte, this army was on its westward march by Verdun and Ménéhould to Châlons. Having made these arrangements, the King went to Ligny, to join his son, the Crown Prince. His arrival was described in the following letter from the Special Correspondent with the Third Army, dated Ligny, August 24 :—

This is a great day in the campaign of the Third Army of Germany. His Majesty the King of Prussia has arrived at headquarters, attended by General von Moltke, and the streets of Ligny have been choked with Bavarian troops from early morning until late in the afternoon. They have had a busy day in Ligny. The columns have gone by in a ceaseless stream, with loud trumpet-notes and with a constant roll of drums. Regiment after regiment of infantry has tramped past my window, battery after battery of field-guns has rumbled slowly along, and the shrill cavalry trumpets have filled the town with their clangour. The scene in the public square has been one of the most crowded and warlike that you can well imagine. Oxen brought for food, horses and waggons, have been jumbled together into apparently hopeless confusion. The brass bands have been heard at the end of the street, have come nearer and nearer, and have gone proudly by with swelling strains of triumph. Now we have seen cattle led behind the regiments, now groups of men with litters for the wounded, or waggon-loads of cartridges for the breechloaders. Even as I write the movement still continues. There is a murmur of voices like a mighty stream, and a clatter of hoofs like the same stream foaming over rocks. More waggons. They are actually at a trot, and yet the road is not cleared. If this be a single *corps d'armée*, what must be that whole district alive with soldiers, which represents the invasion of France in 1870? I can well understand the expression of an old general officer in the Prussian service, who said, not long since, when some one spoke of bringing 30,000 more men into the field, "Thirty thousand more? why, we should not have room for them to manœuvre!" The Germans have made such an effort, and put so large a force into the field, that they are not an army, but a nation under arms.

It is curious to hear the old folks hereabouts speak of the great war of 1815. They can remember the Allied Sovereigns at Ligny in that memorable year, and tell how a grand review was held on a plateau to the east of the town. Talk of King William as a stranger, and they will recount his arrival here with the invaders of fifty-five years ago. Ask them about the antiquities of their neighbourhood, and they will show you the house where the Allied Sovereigns were quartered in that bygone campaign. Yet there is something to be seen of greater relative antiquity. The ruined castle by the waterside is a fine fragment of the middle ages. It was used as a local prison or place of detention for short terms until eighteen months ago—I can only say that I am glad I was not detained here—and it is still habitable in a few of its rooms. From the top of the tower there is a good view of the town and the surrounding hills. The road can be seen winding down from the eastward between the fruitful vineyards, and stretching away over the more level ground to the westward, flanked by poplar trees, as a genuine French *chaussée* ought to be. Beside the road is the canal, where great barges lie idle in this troublous time, and farther on, at a little distance from Ligny, is the station of the Paris and Strasburg Railway. We are only 232 kilometres from Paris—about 137 miles—and if there should be really an undisturbed occupation at Châlons, the plot will become very thick indeed. Those regiments and batteries which have been all day filing past the Crown Prince's quarters have gone steadily forward on to Paris. How far they will march unopposed we cannot guess.

The Bavarian troops are in excellent condition. They have been coming through Ligny at a steady pace, and their horses show no sign of exhaustion, despite the rough usage of the last few weeks. The artillery in particular are smart and soldierly. Their uniform is more becoming than that of the cavalry or the line. You must understand that the characteristic of Bavarian military costume is a helmet with a crested plume. This helmet looks extremely well with the dark uniform of the artillery. But to an English eye it sits heavily on the infantry. A regiment of riflemen, for example, with helmets such as our Life Guards wore at Waterloo, is something which must be seen to be realized. I am bound to own that the Bavarians carry off their heaviness of head-dress with a quick, active step, and with great toughness of appearance. They are not big men, being smaller decidedly than the Prussians, but they are strongly built, and seem very robust. Their brass bands are as good as could be wished, and played them up to the Prince's quarters

in first-rate style, whilst, as regards their equipment for a campaign, the soldiers of King Louis are capitally provided. We have seen to-day a specimen of every branch of their service—the infantry steady and solid, the artillery very well furnished, and the cavalry, though not mounted so well as the Prussians, with a soldierly air about them, which promises great things in the rough service of the outposts. These Bavarians are no contemptible allies for Prussia. Here is the Crown Prince leading an army of them to Châlons—perhaps to Paris itself. Here are their sky-blue uniforms pressing forward into the heart of France. They carry breech-loaders, but not the famous needle-gun, and they have proved what they can do in the way of fighting at Weissenburg and at Wörth. The enemies of Prussia in 1866 have become good and helpful friends to the common cause in 1870.

Where the large standard hangs out in the narrow street, and the sentries are always on guard, are the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, the Commander-in-Chief of the Third German Army. You might have seen the whole Staff of his Royal Highness before the door at about two o'clock to-day, and you would have gathered from the excitement of the officers who kept the road clear that some event of importance was expected. Bullocks were hastily driven to one side; waggons were ordered off in no measured terms; everything spoke of busy preparation for the King's arrival. A way was made through the throng of vehicles, and the movement of the Bavarian columns was checked for a while. Now there appeared an escort of cavalry at full trot. Now an open carriage behind them. That general with the flat undress cap and grey moustache, leaning back in the carriage, was the chief man of all Germany, King William of Prussia himself. He passed quickly to his son's quarters, and alighted amid the cheers of the soldiery. If Napoleon could only have captured the house, and the group on the pavement before it—if only!—but there is much virtue in the "if." Yonder tall slightly-built officer, with the rather thin face, the bright penetrating eyes, and aquiline nose, is Von Moltke, who has out-manceuvred every opponent. Near him stands another man in uniform, a civilian rather than a soldier—if all Prussians were not rated as soldiers—Count Otto von Bismarck, the Chancellor of the North German Bund. He, too, is tall, and his firm remarkable face is too well known to need a word of comment. Every one knows, by photographs and pictures, the face of Count Bismarck. Well may the good folks of Ligny stare at these new arrivals. They are the movers of the great machine which has overthrown the French scheme of conquest and invasion.

On the 25th of August, the royal head-quarters were at Bar-le-Duc, where the King and the Crown Prince heard that MacMahon, whom they had expected to find at Châlons, had broken up his camp and burned his tents, had made at first for Rheims, and then had struck off in a northerly direction. It seemed impossible that an eminent French commander had ordered such a movement; but the German reports were clear, abundant, and trustworthy. The eye of Count Moltke at once took in all the possibilities of the situation. The Crown Prince of Saxony should meet MacMahon, and hold him in the Argonne; and by rapid marches the Third Army, under the Crown Prince of Prussia, should arrive in time to sweep round upon his right flank, and hem him in against the Belgian frontier. On the 26th, the Crown Prince of Saxony was marching for Stenay, on the Meuse, and the Crown Prince of Prussia was advancing by forced marches to Clermonte en Argonne and Grand Pré.

MacMahon could only succeed on one condition—that he should outstrip the enemy by the celerity of his movements; but how unfit his army was for the most ordinary operations of war is seen in the fact that his two columns only reached Sedan and Beaumont on the 30th, having spent seven days in accomplishing the distance of fifty miles from Rheims. By that time the two German armies had arrived in the neighbourhood, and were looking for him. On the 27th MacMahon reached Le Chêne Populeux, and there, becoming aware of the danger in which the proximity of the two German armies placed him, resolved to save his army by a speedy retreat, and had actually given orders to that effect, when in the middle of the night he received positive injunctions from Paris to go forward and relieve Metz. The Emperor, who afterwards disclosed this extraordinary fact, was present with the Marshal, but “he was resolved not to oppose the decision of the Regency, and had resigned himself to submit to the consequences of the fatality which attached itself to all the resolutions of the Government.” MacMahon then obeyed, and attempted to reach Montmédy by Stenay. But it was found that the Prussians were at Stenay, so he established his head-quarters at Raucourt, in order to pass the Meuse at Mouzon. On the morning of August 30th, a portion of the French army was across the river, when the right wing under De Failly was attacked at Beaumont by a Bavarian corps from the Crown Prince’s army, and thrown back in great disorder on the Meuse; and on the same day another German corps struck a heavy blow at the left wing of MacMahon’s army at Mouzon. The beaten corps rallied behind the Chiers at nightfall, between Remilly and Douzy, but dispirited, the troops having no confidence in their commanders, in their future, or in themselves.

The 31st of August was spent by MacMahon as the 17th had been by Bazaine, occupying positions and preparing for a great defensive battle. His line extended from Sedan, on the Meuse, to Givonne, near the Belgian frontier. The villages of Balan and Bazeilles were in front, forming with the Chiers a line of defence not to be despised by an assailant. In front of him, on the other side of the Chiers, was the Crown Prince of Saxony and the Fourth Army, while the Crown Prince of Prussia was on his right flank, and separated from him by the Meuse. The Germans had nearly 240,000 men. The French were about 100,000. The Special Correspondent with the Crown Prince's army has thus described the advance of the Third Army and the position of the Germans, in a letter dated August 31st, on the eve of the battle of Sedan:—

There need be no hesitation or reserve as to speaking of to-morrow's possibilities. The plot has thickened since I last wrote, and the French must now be perfectly aware of the movement against their right flank. I necessarily write in such haste, and in the midst of such confusion, noise, dust, and trampling of feet, that it is difficult to give you a clear account of what is going on around me. On this bright August day, the last day of the month, hot, dry, and dusty, a great historical drama is hurrying to its close. How the trumpets ring out upon the evening air, as the long columns of cavalry clatter and jingle through the village streets! How ceaseless is the rumbling of waggons! Battalion after battalion of Prussian infantry has come by hot and dusty—a whole army has passed through the village during this memorable day of the forced march. To put it in more exact and technical fashion, the French advance from Rheims towards Metz and Thionville has been thwarted by a movement of the 12th and 4th Corps of the Second Army in the enemy's front, and by wonderfully rapid marching of the Crown Prince's army against the right flank of their opponents. Picture to yourself two lines of road, running nearly parallel, the one considerably to the northward of the other. From Châlons to Metz is the first line, from Rheims to Thionville is the second. It would seem that the French abandoned their camp at Châlons, and left open the road to Paris, in order that they might take the second or northernmost of these two routes, and proceed to the relief of Metz. We have no reason to doubt but that they seriously intended to cut their way through, and that four *corps d'armée* were assembled under the Emperor's orders. Where they seem to have been deceived was in the belief that a forward movement could be safely effected before the Crown Prince

would be upon them. Never were plans better laid than those of the Prince and his chief of the Staff, General Blumenthal. Many days ago this whole manœuvre of doubling up the French line by swinging round upon it, "left shoulders forward," was arranged at the Prince's head-quarters. It was calculated that, by almost superhuman efforts in the way of marching, the 5th and 11th Prussian Corps, the Bavarians, and Württembergers, might effect such a concentration as would baffle the French design of relieving Metz. The 6th Corps was scarcely able to get up in time by any efforts—that is, to swing round in time in its wide circle to the westward—but it would be ready to guard the left flank of the Germans, and to act as a support to the Württembergers in case of need. Here was the trap ready laid. Here was a repetition of the shutting in of a French force northward of the main road, such as had been witnessed at Metz. But this time it was even more serious for those likely to be so shut in. The Belgian frontier was the rock ahead in case of defeat. The Belgian frontier and the frontier of neutral Luxemburg are not far off from our present position. One great defeat, one hard struggle, ending in favour of Germany, and the whole French army, baggage, artillery, military chest, may be driven into the unwilling embrace of our good allies of Belgium. I speak thus at length of the great shutting in of the French, of the wonderful forced march of the Crown Prince's army, to explain a catastrophe of which you will have heard by telegraph. The needle-gun may do as well as the Chassepôt in a battle; but whichever weapon be the more destructive, there is no doubt that the dogged pluck of the Prussians in marching, their utter indifference to fatigue, has done more than their steady fusilade to win successes for King William.

First through rain and slush, then in milder weather, and with dust instead of mud under foot, the Third Army has swung round upon its foe. Had the French been strong enough to have a well-appointed corps of observation to the southward of Vitry—of say 80,000 men—this wheeling round of the Prussians could hardly have been risked. But the Crown Prince has disregarded the slight danger of an attack upon his rear by an ill-organized militia, and with the 6th Corps covering his left, more by necessity than choice, has closed upon MacMahon. There was hard marching to reach the point of vantage, but when we rode out yesterday to see the advance against the French position it was lovely weather. The bayonets of the infantry glittered in the sunshine. You must fancy yourself moving from hill to hill across valleys full of armed men. You must crowd the white straight roads with rumbling trains of artillery

and great masses of cavalry far to the front, where the farthest patches of woodland grow indistinct among the red and brown fields. The whole country southward of the road from Beaumont to Le Chêne is alive with German troops. The Bavarians are near Beaumont; the 4th Prussian Corps is farther to the right, and closes round upon the line of the Meuse. Immediately before us is the 5th Prussian Corps, pushing towards Stonne and Chemery. We see flashes of artillery near Beaumont. Then a heavy cannonade begins on the distant ridge behind that place—the 1st Bavarian Corps has surprised a French division in the little town, capturing a good deal of baggage. Those “slow” Germans are to the fore again! The French reply with vigour to their assailants, and white puffs of smoke break out in all directions. There is evidently a sharp struggle to our right front about Beaumont and Mouzon, but to the left and centre the battle languishes. There is a little distant shelling, and some skirmishing in the extreme front, though the two parties are not in force near one another. Stonne is abandoned by the French, and we mount to its central position, from which everything can be seen. That battle on the right grows fiercer—crash after crash of musketry resounds from the woods near Beaumont. We can see the flashes brightly on the hills, and as night comes on we hear with thrilling effect the sharp rolling volley of the mitrailleuses. They must be fighting very hard, and the troops bivouacked upon the hills near Stonne are eager to be among the combatants. But they cannot get there to-night, and must rest upon their position, with that dull rolling and grumbling of the cannonade to stir them round their sparkling watch-fires.

The fighting of August 30th was a preparation for the decisive closing in of August 31st. The 4th Corps took several thousand prisoners, several French cannon, and checked all advance to the south-eastward. The Bavarians also took cannon and prisoners, and the Prussians of the Third Army pushed into a good position close to the enemy's outposts. It will probably be found that yesterday's battle was an important affair—more important than one at first imagined.

The battle of Sedan was described by the same Correspondent in the following letter, dated Chemery, September 1st:—

The German arms have to-day been crowned with wonderful success. The greatest triumph of the war has been achieved in this battle of Sedan, and the Emperor of the French himself is among the prisoners. I have not time to tell of the clamour and rejoicings of the soldiery round about me. Before the post goes out there will not be time enough to describe the battle

in its barest details. An army cut off and surrounded—an Emperor taken prisoner! These are not common results. It is so overwhelming a catastrophe for France that one can excuse the tears in the old soldier's eyes, who dashes his crutch upon the floor, and will not even smoke his pipe. It is so overwhelming a catastrophe that one cannot but sigh over the evident pleasure of the ordinary villagers at seeing a hope of peace.

How did it come about that they were caught? Thousands of my countrymen will be asking this question. The answer is plain. The French were out-manceuvred in the first rush of the war. They were beaten into a corner at Metz, blockaded in Alsace, and, generally speaking, "done for" by the splendid organization of their enemies. I have often spoken to you of the same organization—have often suggested that it must prevail. There is no need to go further back than the blocking of Bazaine at Metz to explain the capture of Napoleon at Sedan. It was felt that Bazaine must be relieved at any cost, and here is the price paid without success. Napoleon moved from Rheims towards Metz, along the northern frontier of his empire, in the desperate hope of fighting his way to the eastward, or of being allowed to pass without a battle. The Germans swung round their left wing with tremendous energy, brought up their centre sharply into line, and pinned the French against the Belgian frontier in the little fortress of Sedan. Never was such marching seen as that of the 5th and 11th Corps. Whilst the 4th Corps, on the left of the Crown Prince of Saxony's army, and the Bavarians on the right of the Crown Prince of Prussia's army, were engaged in that sharp affair of August 30th, the 5th and 11th Corps, on the left of the Crown Prince of Prussia, were marching round the outside of the circle to the westward of the German forces. As we returned to head-quarters after the battle of the 30th, near Beaumont and Mouzon, we found thousands of men camped, or rather bivouacked, on the hills near Stonne. They cheered the Crown Prince loudly, and were full of spirit for whatever might be wanted of them. Though they had marched some five-and-twenty miles that day, they were in excellent condition. Their bivouacs were well ordered; their camp fires were blazing bright and clear. The light of the camp fires on one hill was as significant as the flashes of rifle and mitrailleuse on the other hill, which told of where Frenchmen and Germans were fiercely contending. These camp fires to the extreme left, these crowded masses of men cheering the Prince, told of the energy with which Blumenthal was supporting the

plans of Moltke, and of the determined shutting in which was destined to ruin the French.

They tramped along in light marching order, their knapsacks carried in waggons which followed at a distance. They rushed into cottages for water, or for a glass of wine, if any could be found. Tired and thirsty, the Prussian regiments thronged through Chemery on the 31st August. Tired and thirsty, they passed on to the front. As each battalion neared the Prince's quarters the drums rolled out, the men held up their heads, and went by as at a review in Berlin, but that every one seemed to have been previously rolled in dust-bins. Dusty as they were, the infantry had a fine appearance. They all seemed to understand the need of hard marches, and to be buoyed up with the hope of complete victory.

So the net was spread, and the ends were drawn in, and the French army at Sedan was doomed to destruction. The battle of August 30th had shown that it would not be able to proceed eastward, as the Germans were everywhere so strong. Would it be able even to escape in a westerly direction? The French had got so near to Belgium that, as you might say of a ship, the least puff of wind would put them ashore. They had a chance of escaping on the morning of August 31st, by leaving their baggage and most of their artillery in Sedan, and making a running fight of it with the whole army towards Mézières and Laon. But they were too proud to run away, too slow in their movements to retreat with dignity, and were caught at a hopeless disadvantage.

The battle of Sedan was begun by the Bavarians. General von der Tann, chief of the 1st Bavarian Corps, was ready in the grey twilight to open fire, and was only prevented from leading off the attack at 4 A.M. by the thick mist in the valley of the Meuse. When we came to the hill above Donchery, at about six o'clock, there was still a mist in the valley, but it had somewhat lifted, and the dull booming of cannon told that the Bavarians were at work. You must fancy a great half circle closing in to form a complete circle of fire round the town. Place yourself at the Crown Prince of Prussia's station on the hill above Donchery, and take the corps in the order in which they stand. The 5th and 11th Prussian Corps are straining northward to close round to the left. The 6th Corps is coming round far behind, to the left rear, and will bear no part in the action, but the Württembergers, also on the left, and in advance of the 6th Corps, will have a battle of their own with the French from Mézières. Just before us there is Sedan, protected by its ramparts, and by an artificial inundation of the meadows beside the Meuse. To the right of the hill

above Donchery are the two Bavarian Corps, only the first of them destined to play a part on September 1st; while beyond these two corps are the forces under the Crown Prince of Saxony—the 4th Prussian, the 6th Saxon, and the corps of Prussian Guards. Thus is the circle composed which gradually closes round Sedan. King William himself takes the supreme command, because there are present two German armies—the Third Army, of the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the “Combined Army,” as it is called, of the Saxon Crown Prince. The King is posted on some high ground, behind the Bavarians, to the right of the hill above Donchery. Bismarck and Von Moltke are with the King, Blumenthal is with the Prince of Prussia. With the Prince are also several other men of note, attached to his Highness’s Staff. The Duke of Augustenburg and Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern are both serving on the Staff, the former in Bavarian uniform, the latter in Prussian. The Duke of Coburg Gotha is there, and so are the Princes of Weimar, of Mecklenburg, and Würtemberg. It was natural that they should be present, because they have been on the Crown Prince of Prussia’s Staff throughout the war. But their presence, together with the fighting of Bavarians and Saxons side by side with Prussians on September 1st, and the fighting of the Würtembergers on the same day, towards Mézières, gives an additional stamp of German unity to the final effort. All Germany seems to be here; the Princes and the commonalty coming forth with equal zeal to repel an invasion. And here is the deadly counter-stroke by which it is being met.

The whole country as far as the frontier lies spread out like a map before us. Donchery is as clearly to be seen as though a biscuit could be tossed down into it, and where the mist rises still farther the course of the Meuse may be traced by stunted willows in the great bend northward which it makes hereabouts. There is no better way of realizing the features of the locality than by taking a horseshoe, producing one end straight to your left, and the other end somewhat backward to your right. On the part straight to your left is Donchery, with its line of hills across the back of the shoe. On the part prolonged to your right is Bazeilles, with a railway bridge in excellent condition. Sedan lies on the river to the right hand, where the first nail would be, and the off-side of the horseshoe bend. Cazal and Floing are farther along on the right side, and St. Meuges is about at the front of the shoe. The villages of Daigny and Givonne lie back to the right, or behind the town, where the country is hilly and wooded. The great plain is to the left of the bend, and as the Prussian troops arrive on that side they

move quickly forward across the plain to turn round the end of the horseshoe and come back down its right side. The Belgian frontier is a little way beyond the front of the shoe, so that there is ample room for the 5th and 11th Corps to act upon the line of retreat from Sedan in that direction. We can hear a constant rumbling of waggons and clattering of hoofs, as the German left is advanced, whilst there is a louder and louder roll of musketry and booming of cannon where the Bavarians are holding the French in play to the right. At first there is a line of white smoke puffs, forming less than a semicircle to the south, south-west, and south-east of the French. The battle is hotly maintained near Bazeilles, and the French respond with energy to the attack of the Germans. It is a very sultry day. The smoke-clouds hang lower and lower over the Meuse, as the mist was hanging a few hours earlier. Bright sunshine glitters upon the cuirasses of a Prussian regiment that trots down to the right to support the Bavarian guns, at the base of the horseshoe. A second and yet a third regiment of cavalry follow with great jingling and clatter. The scene upon the hill, near the Crown Prince's Staff, is one of active preparation. There are guns dragged lumberingly at the heels of the cavalry, and innumerable waggons follow as hard as they can go. Stragglers hurry up to join their corps, orderlies gallop away reckless of their necks, or gallop back with panting steeds up the steep road. It is thought better for the escort to dismount, and for the officers' horses to be held a little to the rear, so as not to draw the French fire upon the Staff by an unnecessary display of force. That same French fire is, however, distracted and dispersed by numerous assailants. The roar of cannon grows more intense with each minute as noontide approaches. It is clear that the army of MacMahon—we afterwards learnt that the Marshal had been wounded at an early hour, and that De Wimpffen had taken the command—is in desperate peril. Like some ship labouring in the trough of the sea, the beleaguered host of France is pitifully helpless. There was a time when a squadron of light horse, or even a travelling carriage at a brisk trot, might have got away to Belgium. The northern road was open when the battle began, but the French seemed to have no idea of flight. Crushed and hampered as they are, they fight like brave men. The battle is a mere battue by one o'clock, and the circle of white smoke puffs almost shuts in the French position. This is essentially an affair of artillery, and the German guns seem to be well served, besides being powerful. But there is a constant rattle of small-arm fire in the direction of Bazeilles, where flames and black smoke tell of a conflagration. The Crown Prince of

THE BATTLEFIELD BEFORE SEDAN



The elevations are given in metres

Saxony, too, is coming steadily on. It has appeared for a moment that he was checked by the efforts of the despairing French; but the German right is growing evidently stronger, and the circle of white smoke puffs is very clearly defined to the north-eastward. Then to the left there is a sharp engagement; as the 11th Prussian Corps forces its way into Cazal and Floing, a splendid artillery fire supports the attacks of the infantry. We can see that all escape has been cut off as the Prussians get from village to village towards the slope of rising ground behind Floing, and north-westward of Sedan. If that slope be once cleared of Frenchmen, the only thing for the French to do will be to cut their way out through the Crown Prince of Saxony's army, or to retreat almost within the walls of the town. They cannot fight on their present line with Prussians in their rear.

It is a sight of terrible interest. The hill-side behind Floing has been the scene of a regular stand-up battle between lines of infantry, and there is a cannonade from another sloping ground more to the left, which smites the French with startling precision. Loud rattle the volleys of the mitrailleuses. Some four or five pieces are planted on the hill, and work hard to keep back the Prussians. But they seem to be silenced or withdrawn, and the dark masses of King William's soldiers gain several acres; all about the little cottage and the two trees at the hill-top there is a fierce encounter. Lines of infantry stand firing at one another, and it is clear that the loss is considerable, for many men fall killed and wounded. What a wild confusion it is, now that the lines have advanced and retired several times! There are scattered parties of Frenchmen rallied by their officers, and Germans brought back to the charge with hearty zeal. Both sides fight splendidly. But, on the whole, the Prussian fire seems to prevail, and the French wither before it. The shells are doing much that we cannot appreciate at a distance. Dust flies up now and then; but it is hard to see what has been done. Yet we notice that the efforts of the French reserves to restore the battle fail before the steadiness of the Prussian attack. When one Prussian battalion hesitates, when even there is a charge in line by a body of French infantry, which requires a good deal of ground, there is always a creeping up of more and more of the dark-coated assailants. Their guns cease firing for fear of hitting them, and a gallant dash of French light cavalry is made to recover the hill-side. They ride forward, half hidden in dust, and seem for a moment to succeed; but the artillery re-opens, the infantry pour in a deadly fire, and we see the ground strewn with men and horses. The cavalry wheel about,

and go galloping back like a receding wave. That hill-side must remain in Prussian hands. No, there is another rally by the French infantry. Once more they come on. The thin, blue smoke rises above the line, and they almost run in their wild attempt to push home. But the attack withers away, and nothing can be seen of the regiment which made it. There has been heavy loss it is easy to see, though the men who fall cannot now be well distinguished in the confusion.

There are other points carried by the Germans, and a closing in of the circle of white smoke round Sedan. Then a fresh attempt to break through, as though somebody of importance were to be cut out at any cost. We see numbers of Frenchmen making for the gates of the town, others wandering about as though not knowing what to do. There is a gradual cessation of the cannonade, and by about five o'clock all is quiet, save for the dropping shots from the batteries near the King's position. There is a great outburst of flame and smoke in the town, as if some stores of combustibles had taken light, and there is a rumour that the white flag has been hoisted by the French. Then it is whispered that all these crowded troops—sixty, seventy, perhaps eighty thousand men—must surrender, for that they have no food. They surrender? Not only they, the Imperial soldiers, but the Emperor too. It is known that General Reille, an aide-de-camp of Napoleon, has come out to King William with a letter from the Emperor to his Prussian Majesty. The troops are wild with joy; they have caught him then, and there will be an end to the war.

Two days afterwards the same Correspondent thus described the capitulation and its immediate results:—

When the firing had ceased on that terrible day before yesterday, and the great smoke cloud of the explosion in the town had slowly drifted away, there was as strange a scene of military disaster as could well be imagined. A large army was shut into the space which one division might have occupied. The fortress of Sedan had so many defenders as to make it indefensible. I have told, in a former letter, how General Reille, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, came out with a flag of truce, and was brought to King William on the hill above the Meuse. To have gone on fighting would have been madness, for the German troops held every approach to the town, and the French troops, shattered and discouraged, could not have hoped to cut their way through. They were reduced to so small a circle of outworks that, whilst they attacked one German corps, they might have been cannonaded in rear by most of the others. In a word, their condition was desperate. What a moment for

the proud ruler of France! The greatest of his enemies could have wished him nothing worse; and as it became known that he himself was in the town, that this flag of truce was from the Emperor in person, and that Napoleon III. would become a prisoner of war, men gasped for breath. Königgrätz was a great victory, but was nothing to this. There were murmurs of astonishment, almost of disbelief, as group after group of German officers, along the dusty road, learnt what had happened. It could not be doubted. The Emperor's aide-de-camp had been seen speaking with the King. And now, when it was certain that the news was true, unbounded joy filled the German host. There was a prospect of getting home again! These stern conquerors of Sedan were quiet citizens from another point of view, and thought that they had done a good share of fighting for their term of service. Germany would be safe in future, and they would have a joyful return, or, better still, first see Paris and then return home. The Crown Prince was wildly cheered as he came back to his quarters at Chemery. Every one was ordered to have lighted candles in their windows, and the soldiers made such a joyous din that there was a panic among the French inhabitants. Women screamed, and men retreated to their houses, not knowing what the hubbub might mean. My poor old landlady rushed at me for protection, and clung to my arm, saying, "Ah, monsieur, you will save me, will you not? You can speak to them. You can tell them that I have given all the bread I had. There is none left; not even a morsel for my supper!" She trembled with terror as the shouts grew louder, and was only reassured by being told that this wild hurrahing meant "Vive le Prince!" The Emperor a prisoner, the army surrendered! what did villagers know about such great matters? She hoped there would be peace; she knew that, and so did they all. It was lucky that an illumination had been ordered, for otherwise somebody must have been run over in the noisy, crowded street.

Yesterday morning, quite early, a carriage containing four French officers drove out from Sedan and came into the German lines. The carriage was accompanied by three officers on horseback, but had no other escort, and when it had got among the Germans one of its occupants put out his head, and asked them, in their own language, where was Count Bismarck? He must see him at once. The Germans said that Donchery was the most likely spot in which to find the Count, though no one knew exactly his whereabouts. Forward, then, to Donchery. The carriage dashed away, and many a curious glance was cast after it. That short drive was known to be a great historic event. Count Bismarck might live all the years that a courteous

Arab would wish him, and never have such another visitor in the early morning. They met at a small house outside the town, on the left bank of the Meuse—a house where, oddly enough, the inmates, being from Luxemburg, spoke both French and German. On his first arrival the Emperor went inside. But it was thought that they could sit more comfortably in the open air—it was a delightfully fine fresh morning—so chairs were placed for them, and there they sat talking for a couple of hours. The Emperor wore the undress uniform of a general, but with one decoration on his breast, and with the usual *kepi* of the French service. Count Bismarck was in his white cuirassier uniform undress, with a flat cap and long boots. If you picture them sitting outside the small house, with the Staff officers present lying on the patch of grass not far off, and the tall poplar trees flanking the *chaussée* as far as it can be seen, you will realize this striking episode. Napoleon looked better in health than last year, but anxious and careworn. He asked to see King William, and said that he placed himself at His Majesty's disposition. As to politics, he avoided all show of dealing in any way, whilst a prisoner, with the fate of France. He surrendered with his army, but could not yield one jot, politically, on behalf of the French people or of the Government of the Empress Regent. Count Bismarck, in his turn, placed before Napoleon the fact that this surrender of Sedan must be complete—I had well-nigh said, must be “unconditional”—but that would be going too far. It must be a complete surrender, because the French were not in a position to ask better terms. The Emperor much desired to see King William before the articles of capitulation were signed. This, however, the King had thought it better, both for himself and his illustrious prisoner, to refuse. They could not so well arrange a hard bargain as could their Ministers and Generals. In everything personal the King was resolved to treat the Emperor with consideration. But as to the question of the terms to be granted, that was another matter.

When Napoleon and Bismarck had chatted for a little while more of indifferent things, this long-to-be-remembered interview beside the Meuse was brought to an end. The Count went to prepare his own quarters in Donchery for the Emperor's reception, but it was afterwards decided that a snug château near Frenois would be more convenient, as Napoleon wished to be as little seen by people as possible. Hither, then, he was escorted by a detachment of the 1st Prussian Cuirassiers, and here he remained whilst Generals de Wimpffen and Von Moltke discussed the terms of the surrender of Sedan. There was a hard bargain to drive, but proportionate power of driving

it. Not an inch of their past gains had been neglected by the Germans. Masses of infantry were posted on every line of approach to the town, guns were still pointed against the French, and a numerous body of cavalry was ready to sweep down upon any stragglers who should perchance get through in the confusion of a sortie. The King had declared that he should re-open fire if the capitulation were not signed by noon of the 2nd inst. It was altogether a desperate case—a thorough checkmate of a fine but disheartened army. De Wimpffen was convinced of this when Von Moltke pointed out to him how carefully he had prepared his plans. Sadly and reluctantly the French General agreed to sign, as the only thing to be done. The whole army, including the Emperor, were to be considered prisoners of war. There was, indeed, a clause by which the officers were to be at liberty to return home on their written promise not to serve against Prussia or her allies during the present contest. But they were to take their men safely into Germany, and hand them over to German commissioners. Arms and horses, artillery, and war material of all kinds, were to be given up, the town of Sedan was to be thrown open to the Germans, and the French soldiers were to be taken out to the meadows in the bend of the Meuse, between Donchery and Sedan, and there encamped until their departure for Germany could be conveniently managed. De Wimpffen spoke bitterly of his having hurried back from Africa only to find such a task as this devolve upon him. It was indeed an ill-omened journey to join a force which he found out-numbered and out-mancœuvred, defeated, one might almost say, before the battle began, and to assist in an act of surrender that would be his eternal regret.

King William made a visit to the captive Emperor in the château of Frenois yesterday afternoon. Napoleon remained perfectly calm at the beginning of the visit. He received his guest of 1867, and his conqueror of to-day, with grave politeness, spoke with him for a few moments in an outer room, and then withdrew with the King into another room, where no one followed them. The Crown Prince stepped to the door and closed it, and the French and German officers present remained some little time waiting before Napoleon and the King returned. What they had said to each other may have concerned the status of the captive Emperor. Certain it is that Napoleon was much affected by the courtesy of King William, and that he expressed to the Crown Prince in warm terms his sense of the generous manner in which he had been treated. To-day, September 3rd, the Emperor has started for Aix-la-Chapelle on his way to his future residence in Germany. He is to be lodged during his detention in the Palace of Wilhelmsöhe, in Cassel,

a palace where once lived his uncle, King Jerome of Westphalia, and which was then called "Napoleonshöhe." The Emperor desired to pass as little as might be through French territory, and to travel very quietly. His personal luggage, his servants, and his handsomely-appointed carriages, have been allowed to accompany him, with, I believe, a few French officers of his household, whilst General Boyen, of the Prussian army, and Count de Lynar, late Prussian Councillor of Embassy in Paris, have been attached to him as aides-de-camp.

The muddy streets of Donchery, with their crowd of soldiers and teamsters, of waggons and led horses, were cleared for a few minutes this morning, between nine and half-past nine, that a train of carriages might pass at a trot and take the northern road round the great bend of the river. The people stared with idle wonder. Who could it be? Another general, perhaps. Alas! how many generals there were in the world, and how many hungry soldiers! These people would all join the Peace Society to-morrow if they gave effect to their feelings. Another general? No, 'tis he himself! they cry, as they catch sight of the Imperial liveries and of the man in that foremost carriage. 'Tis he himself! Pale and anxious-looking, with his face firm set, but with no overwhelming depression upon it. He glances from the carriage window, and bows in return to the stranger at the corner of the street, who has raised his hat to the fallen Emperor. There are few who raise their hats; but they are horribly afraid of the German soldiers in these parts, and would think themselves as brave as the old Highlander beneath Montrose's scaffold if they took much notice of Napoleon. Then, too, I judge by their muttered remarks that the greater part of them are decidedly anti-Imperialists now, whatever they may have been before the war. The prisoners are even stronger in their language. They have been ruined by imbeciles. They have been betrayed. Their generals ought to be shot. The Emperor found his position so critical in Sedan after the armistice became known, that he was glad to come over and surrender himself, as already described. He could control the storm whilst the men were to fight and die for him, but when it came to all being prisoners together, they were somewhat dangerous in their mood. I hear that this same angry, despairing astonishment at what has happened makes it hard work to manage the eighty thousand prisoners, or more, who have been taken, first and last, about Sedan. There was actual danger of bloodshed this morning when the prisoners began to move out of the town. Happily the officers in command showed admirable tact and firmness. The French kept their old authority by not straining the cord too tight, the

Germans by not showing themselves too much on the scene. Thousands of men have been coaxed out to the camp to-day, thousands will come out to-morrow. Sedan is presenting the wildest scene of confusion which you can imagine. Narrow streets deep in mud—for we have had heavy rain to-day—the soldiers half drunk with the stores of liquor, the houses half burnt, and dead bodies lying everywhere. There are thousands of wounded men to be cared for. Marshal MacMahon was severely injured in the beginning of the battle, though his life is in no danger, and the loss among the French in superior officers has been something dreadful.

You ask, what is to be our next move? I answer, "To Paris." So say the men, so says the whole voice of public rumour and public opinion in the German armies. To Paris, unless the French will yield up Strasburg and Metz, and pay the war expenses. Count Bismarck would be content with less, but the German people insist on hard terms, and the German people must be obeyed. To Paris, then, is the cry, and with their accustomed energy the muddy, travel-stained legions of King William are off and away on the road to the French capital. You ask what the numbers of the contending armies were in this crowning victory of September 1st. There seems to have been a rather larger French force, and a rather smaller German force, than the officers with whom I spoke had led me to suppose, on the battle-field of Sedan. Let us take the German strength at 175,000, and the French strength at 90,000 men, in the great fight of the day before yesterday. Each side had more men in existence, but not ready to hand. The French had another division at Mézières, which came up and skirmished with the Würtembergers, but could effect nothing to relieve the Emperor. The Germans had the tenth division (of the 5th Corps), which never fired a shot or lost a man on September 1st, and they had the 4th Corps, which only came into line at the end of the fight: thus it would seem that about ninety thousand Frenchmen, somewhat discouraged and somewhat disorganized, were caught in a corner by one hundred and seventy thousand Germans; that the French fought well, but not hopefully; and that the Germans pressed on with stern indifference to their heavy loss, until they had utterly crippled and hampered their opponents. The German fire centred upon Sedan, and the French fire was distributed in all directions, so there was no parity of loss in killed and wounded. So terrible was the German artillery fire; so completely were whole French divisions taken in flank, in rear, and all round the compass, as their enemies closed upon them, that it is pretty safe to fix the French loss at about twice that

of the Germans, or even two and a half times. The mitrailleuses were of no great service; the Chassepôt was, and is, a splendid arm. If the well-organized, well-handled Germans had had the Chassepôt, and the French had used the needle-gun, there would have been an even greater catastrophe. Then as to the troops engaged. The French had a few Zouaves and a good many Turcos, with cavalry, both light and heavy, and a mass of infantry of the line. The Germans had a great many Bavarians—the 1st Bavarian Corps hotly engaged, and the 2nd partly engaged, in the action—a great many Prussians, and among them the Prussian Guard Corps, the finest troops in the country. The Prussian Guards bore a tremendous attack from the French on the extreme right, and one regiment alone, that of the Queen of Prussia, or the 4th Grenadier Regiment, lost five hundred men in a battalion a thousand strong—just half the battalion. The French Imperial Guard bore no part in the battle of Sedan, though by an accident of campaigning the French Emperor was taken prisoner. I have seen the greater part of the field of battle—a terrible sight—of which, as far as it assists in understanding what occurred, I will tell you in my next letter.

The Emperor Napoleon has recently given the world the exact form of the communications which passed between him and the King of Prussia, on the evening of September 1st:—

“Sire my brother,—Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, it only remains for me to place my sword in the hands of your Majesty.—I am your Majesty’s good brother,

“NAPOLÉON.

“*Sedan, Sept. 1, 1870.*”

The King replied as follows:—

“Sire my brother,—Regretting the circumstances under which we meet, I accept the sword of your Majesty, and I invite you to designate one of your officers provided with full powers to treat for the capitulation of the army which has so bravely fought under your command. On my side I have named General Moltke for this purpose.—I am your Majesty’s good brother,

“WILHELM.

“*Before Sedan, Sept. 1, 1870.*”

On the 3rd the Special Correspondent wrote:—

The evacuation of the town has gone on in earnest to-day. Already there is a great camp on the peninsula within the bend of the Meuse. The prisoners taken in the battle have gone away in strong detachments, guarded by German troops, and those

who were upon the rainy, muddy road to the rear last night, as was the present writer, saw columns of Frenchmen tramping briskly along, with the German escort marching by their side in the worst of humours at being so employed, and with blankets muffled over the men's heads to keep off the rain. Well might the villagers stare at so novel a sight—their own countrymen blocking the way, but blocking it as prisoners—their own uniform dragged to prison, as if it were a capital crime to be a Frenchman. The poor folks seemed chiefly anxious to avoid further loss, and chiefly suspicious of soldiers of any kind. But it was clear that amid all their terror and all their fear of downright starvation, they had a warm corner in their hearts for the lads of their own language and nation. I have seen many women to-day cooking for the prisoners and trying to push through the crowd to bring them small dainties. In the church at Donchery there were hundreds of French soldiers collected this morning. Cavalry and infantry, Zouaves and Cuirassiers, huddled together in marvellous fashion. The smart, dashing men whom we have seen when we travelled through France were reduced to a condition of semi-shabbiness and blank despondency which was something new to see. They were wont to be the gayest fellows in the world, and here were rolled up, tumbled over, and generally “done for,” by men whom they had been rash enough to despise.

I rode over the greater part of the battle-field yesterday morning—the morning after the fight. It was a shocking thing to see so many dead men and wounded men, and dead and wounded horses, crowded together in some places. It was a sight to cause reflections, as the old Frenchman said who lived in the village where the fighting had been hottest. “*Ah! mon Dieu, Monsieur, c'est là la guerre.*” He took a sombre view of *la guerre*, for the scene was horrible. With two friends who were anxious to study the positions of the armies contending on September 1st, I went round through Donchery and past the great bend of the Meuse, came towards the French lines as the 11th Prussian Corps had come, and pushing southward between the outposts of the hostile armies, traversed the railway bridge at Bazeilles, to return to head-quarters. The first sign of active and immediate war was the block of prisoners at Donchery. There they were, of all arms of the service, the dark-faced Turco and the young boyish conscript, collected in a mass, ready to be marched away. The plain beyond Donchery was covered with slightly wounded men wandering to the rear. French and German, friend and foe, it mattered not; they went amicably along, the common suffering making them friends. No one seemed to dream of further violence and

further fighting. The battle was over, and they were glad to creep together to the rear, with little civilities exchanged in the way of pipe-lights and sips of brandy, and with no more hostile feeling than two patients already in an hospital. We passed hundreds of them as we went round the bend of the stream and came upon the first signs of the conflict of the day before. There was a dead horse, a cuirass, a heap of broken weapons. In this cottage were several wounded Frenchmen, taking some soup with a wounded Prussian, who seemed almost too much hurt to eat. Behind the garden wall was a dead cuirassier, his hands clutching the grass in the agony of death, his face stern and determined. No one noticed him any more than if he were a dead horse. In quiet England whole districts will turn out to see a murdered family, and here on a battle-field the same murdered family would be trampled into the mud without being noticed. This meadow on the hill-side is full of mangled horses and dead cuirassiers. It was here that they made a frantic attempt to break through, and were mowed down by the Prussian fusilade. You must have been on several battle-fields to understand the signs of what has taken place by the look of the spot next morning. This group of dead horses, with a helmet or two and a dozen cuirasses, with a broken trumpet and three dead cuirassiers, means serious work. The dark stains on the ground are where the wounded have lain and been removed. The little heap of swords under that hedge is where some dismounted troopers were forced to surrender. Then we come to Prussian helmets crushed and trampled. Some are marked by shell or bullet, and have blood upon them. They tell of loss to the regiment to which they belonged. Others have no particular trace of violence, and may either be signs of wounded men, or of men who have simply thrown their helmets away in the heat of action, and put on their forage caps to march more lightly. These dark stains, surrounded by knapsack and rifle, by great-coat and cooking tin, are where men have lain who have been badly wounded, but whose friends have made them as comfortable as could be under the difficulties of the time. One has a little shelter of twigs and branches put to keep off the sun; another has had a blanket propped on two rifles, and his knapsack for a pillow. But he has died in the night, and is left with his cloak over his face until the burying party shall come round. See yonder drums and knapsacks, stains of blood, and dead men lying on their faces. It is where a blow has been struck at some infantry regiment. The men have fallen under a musketry fire, and the line of dead shows where the ground was held. Come a few steps farther to the rear. You perceive

a few more dead men, shot whilst in flight, and a number of bright, well-cleaned rifles scattered on the turf. This is where the regiment broke and fled, where some perished with their backs to the foe, and others threw down their arms. We might gather the minutest details of the loss on either side if only human strength and energy sufficed to traverse this immense tract in a single morning. When another day has passed, and the dead are buried and the arms collected, it is difficult to judge of the fight by seeing the ground; whilst on the third or fourth day, the dead horses become so much decayed that, until they are removed, it is well-nigh impossible to move about where they have fallen. All honour to the helpers of the wounded—to the regular and volunteer hospital assistants. Their red-cross badge must be a joy to many a sufferer; and though some who wear the badge seem disposed to “loaf” about rather than to be helpful and active, yet the greater part do their duty well. The better sort of volunteers in the work—the Sisters of Charity and surgeons who have donned the badge—are full of zeal. Some of the best families in Germany are represented among these helpers of the wounded; there are several foreigners, too, engaged in the common cause of humanity. Thanks to all that is done, the wounded are so soon removed to villages or placed under some sort of shelter, that even next morning there are but few of them to be seen on the ground. They are being brought to the nearest ambulance waggon on stretchers, with many cries and groans, Heaven help them! or are lodged in a cottage near the field, or are carefully bandaged up and laid on straw, and sent jolting painfully away in country carts to a more remote hospital.

We found the hill-side north-west of Sedan covered with dead men and horses. The village in the hollow between the hostile lines was not much knocked about, and there were few shell-marks on the road leading up to the summit. But once arrived at the point where the Prussian fire had begun to tell, we found traces of its terrible effect. Here lay a dead horse in the middle of the road, with saddle and bridle, just as it had fallen. Here was a Frenchman, shot through the head, behind a small clump of earth, where he had taken shelter in skirmishing. Then there were several more horses and men lying upon the road; and at length a slight breastwork to either side, carried along the ridge of the hill, and full of French soldiers who had died in its defence. The ground began to be ploughed up with the shell-fire from the opposite rising ground, where the Prussian artillery so long remained. Near the two trees and the cottage prominent on the summit, were traces of the sharp fighting which I had observed the previous day. A mitrailleuse

battery, of four pieces, was surrounded with dead bodies; horses and men were lying on all sides—I cannot quite say in heaps, but very thickly scattered. At one place there were horses as thick as they could lie. But this was a little farther down the slope to the southward, where I had seen that gallant cavalry charge. The Chasseurs-à-cheval and the Chasseurs d'Afrique had dashed along the hill-side, half hidden in the dust which they raised, and had been destroyed by a steady fusilade. Here lay the famous light horsemen, with their bright uniforms dabbled in blood, and their fiery little steeds crushed and mangled by Prussian shells. Most of the men and horses now on the ground were dead, but some few wounded men yet lingered in agony, with white rings tied to sticks that were planted beside them as a means of calling the surgeon's attention when he should have time to revisit them. The badly wounded horses, more fortunate for once in being brutes, had been killed to put them out of pain, and only a stray horse slightly wounded stood dismally here and there, wondering, perhaps, what it could all mean. Behind the scene of the light cavalry charge is a ravine that separates this shoulder of the rising ground from that immediately above Sedan. In the ravine there had been great slaughter at the end of the fight, when the French were crowded together from different points. Up behind the woods on the farthest summit of the rising ground was all the *débris* of a rout. It had been clear, even from a distance, that the beaten army struggled hard. Yet, nevertheless, they had been beaten, and here were arms thrown down, waggons abandoned, caps and coats, swords and rifles of every branch of the service, lying scattered on the ground. Some considerable body of troops, cut off from Sedan by the advance of the Prussians, had tried to break through to the town, and had been dispersed or captured. The whole of the northward and north-eastward slopes—of what we may call from this side the country—at the back of the town, showed traces of this crowding together and of the heavy cross-fire of German artillery, which had begun so soon as the circle of the attack became narrowed to a sufficient degree. Nearly 100,000 men, as now appears, were hampered and shut in by less than 200,000 of their enemies. No amount of devotion could extricate the French army when once it had become the centre of a converging fire. The ghastly wounds inflicted on most of the French dead whom I saw upon the hill, showed that they had fallen under an artillery fire, and the ground was in many places so ploughed up that a blanket could scarcely have been laid on it without covering some spot where a shell had exploded. The thick woods at the

back of the town were full of wreck and rubbish—abandoned waggons, with the dead horses at the side, to show why they had been so left; stores of biscuit, harness, and soldiers' knapsacks were still very plentiful as one approached the village of Bazeilles, southward of Sedan, where the Bavarians had fought. The village was on fire, and the streets presented shocking sights to scare away the inhabitants again for a couple of days more, should they now return. The half-burnt bodies of Frenchmen and Bavarians were being brought out from among ruins, and laid by the roadside. Men yet living, but terribly wounded and scorched, were moved on litters to beyond the stifling smoke of the conflagration. There was reason to fear that many poor lads had been literally roasted when the fire came upon them, and their wounds forbade all hope of escape. This village was, perhaps, the gloomiest part of all the acres of pain and death spread around Sedan. The interior of the town itself is said to be very much injured, but that I have not yet had time to visit.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE capitulation of an army of eighty thousand men at Sedan—an event unparalleled in military annals, and almost incredible—could only be regarded by all serious and intelligent Frenchmen as a great national disaster. Nevertheless, at Paris, for the moment, all regret was forgotten in the consolatory thought that now at length the Empire—the mysterious source of every kind of misfortune—must inevitably disappear. A stormy meeting in the Chamber, and a little stammering on the part of the Ministers, and then the Empire vanished. Count Palikao informed the Empress on the 4th of September that he could not answer for her safety much longer, and Her Majesty quietly withdrew from France. When, on the same day, a number of representatives of Paris declared themselves a National Government, and severally repaired to take possession of the public offices, they found the places vacant, and occupied them without resistance. The reception of the news of Sedan was thus described by a "Parisian Resident" (later "A Besieged Resident"), writing on Sunday, September 4th:—

The news of the Emperor's capture reached the foreign embassies here at ten yesterday morning. At about eight o'clock it began to be rumoured that the Emperor and MacMahon's army had surrendered. I saw a crowd of about 2,000 men going down the Boulevard, and shouting, "*La déchéance!*" I took the arm of a

patriot, and we all went together to the Louvre to interview General Trochu. He came out after we had shouted for him about half an hour, and a deputation had gone in to him. There was a dead silence as soon as he appeared, so what he said could be distinctly heard. He told us that the news of the capture of the Emperor was true, and that as for arms, he could not give more than he had, and he regretted to say that the millions on paper were not forthcoming. Linked to the arm of my patriot, I then went with the crowd to look up the deputies of the Left, but none of them were at home. The patriot said that he had heard that there was to be a night sitting of the Corps Législatif, so, after refreshing at a café, he and I, with two other gentlemen in blouses, went off to the Place de la Concorde. We crossed the bridge, and joined a crowd standing before the Palais du Corps Législatif. A few minutes after we were there, however, we were forced back across the river by a squadron of Gardes de Paris. In the crowd I lost two of my friends, and found myself alone with one of the blouses. He told me that he was a Republican, and that he meant to fight the next day against the Empire, and then against the Prussians. We sat talking on the parapet of the quay until about 1.30, when the Gardes de Paris fell back, and I not only got across the river, but into a gallery of the Chamber. There were hardly any deputies present, but gradually they came in and took their seats. M. Schneider, the President, appeared, and explained that at the request of several deputies he had called them together; and then General Palikao ascended the tribune, and in the midst of a solemn silence made the statement which you, by the time you receive this, will know. Jules Favre followed him to the tribune, and proposed to declare the *déchéance*. Again silence. At last General Palikao, and after him the President, suggested that it would be well to adjourn until the next morning, and the deputies slowly left. Anything at once so quiet and so lugubrious I never witnessed. When Blouse and I went out the crowd outside had entirely disappeared, and so, shaking hands, we parted, and I went through the silent streets home.

This morning when Paris awoke it found the walls placarded with the address of the Ministers. At eleven o'clock I went to the Place de la Concorde. It was full of people, and from all the streets leading to it armed bands of National Guards were marching. A double line of mounted Gardes de Paris was drawn up before the bridge. I got behind them. The first band of National Guards which tried to pass the bridge were forbidden to do so by the officer commanding the Gardes de Paris. He ordered his soldiers to draw their swords, and the National

Guards on their side shouted, "En avant." I began to feel somewhat uncomfortable; but, after a short parley, the soldiers sheathed their swords, and the National Guards passed over the bridge, shouting, "Vive la République!" This band was followed by many others, until I suppose about 20,000 National Guards had passed the bridge and stood round the Assembly, the flag of which was now flying to show that the *séance* had commenced. By this time there must have been 100,000 men and women in the Place de la Concorde. This crowd was composed of working men, loungers, women, children, and soldiers. Every now and then there was a panic and a rush, but as every one seemed to be of one mind, there was no danger of blood being shed. The following expression I heard about a hundred times, and it sums up the feeling of the Parisians—"An Emperor dies, but does not surrender." On all sides I heard abuse lavished on the Emperor. Every now and then some wiry working man got upon the shoulder of a friend, and shouted, "Vive la République!" "À bas l'Empereur!" when the cry was repeated all around him. Round the gate of the gardens of the Tuileries, which were closed, there was a large crowd. At one time I thought they were going to force open the gate, and attack the few soldiers who were on guard within. Indeed, the garden was only saved by a Zouave inside, who knew his countrymen, dancing the *cancan*. After remaining about two hours on the Place de la Concorde, I went to the Boulevards; they were occupied by a pacific crowd waiting for news. Suddenly a cry was raised, "La République est déclarée." A regiment, the only one which I had seen that day, was marching down. At that moment it was met by a detachment of the National Guard coming from the Chamber Guard, regiment, and people immediately fraternized; the soldiers all reversed their arms. The "Marseillaise" was sung, and the soldiers disappeared into the neighbouring cafés, where they were treated to drink. From the aspect of Paris, one would suppose that news of a great victory had been received. Such perfect unanimity I never witnessed. As it is Sunday, the people are walking about with their wives and children in holiday dress. The Gardes Nationales are marching home along the Boulevards as though they had come from a review. The windows and the pavements are lined with people cheering them. It is felt by all that the surrender of the Chief of the State must be repudiated by the nation; that it has been repudiated; and that the dishonour falls consequently on the man, and not on France.

The Paris Correspondent, writing also on the 4th of September, thus described the events of that memorable day:—

I have witnessed a peaceful revolution in Paris, with results as great as the bloodiest ever known in this city of revolutions. I am about to describe in few words for this post strictly what I saw, and I had the luck to see a great deal. Knowing that the Corps Législatif was to hold an extraordinary sitting at one o'clock, I got into a carriage at two, and told the driver to go to the Champs Elysées, hang about the Place de la Concorde, and get over one of the bridges to the Faubourg St. Germain. He objected that there were great crowds in the route I had marked out for him, and doubted whether he could get along. "Try," said I, and so he did, and we succeeded. On the Place de la Concorde there were many groups of people and several companies of National Guards, but still carriages could circulate. I observed that the National Guards carried laurels on their bayonets, and that numbers of citizens had sprigs of green (meant to represent laurels) in their hats. The laurels could not mean victory over the foreign enemy; but they were worn as emblems of victory over the internal enemy—the Emperor. My attention was attracted to one of the colossal allegorical statues at the north-east corner of the Place, representing the City of Strasburg. This statue was decked out with flowers, and an enormous placard was hung round the neck bearing the words "Honour and glory to General Uhrich." A succession of democratic orators mounted the parapet at the foot of the statue and harangued a vast crowd with great success. I could not get near enough to hear their eloquence, but it was about the Republic, and the certain victory which the Republic could bring. I then turned my carriage and went towards the Place de la Concorde. The approaches were occupied by troops, and it was impossible to cross. I observed the steps of the Corps Législatif on the other side of the river covered with people, and saw that the quays, right and left, were closely studded with infantry, cavalry, National Guards, and people, all mixed up together. At this moment the weather was beautiful—it was one of the most glorious early September days ever seen. I drove slowly along the quay parallel with the orangery of the Tuileries towards the palace. The Tuileries gardens were full of people. I learned that in the morning orders had been given to close the gates, but that half an hour before I passed the people had forced them open, and that neither the troops nor the police made any resistance. My coachman, who, I dare say, was an Imperialist yesterday, but was a very strong Republican to-day, pointed out to me several groups of people bearing red flags. I told him that the tricolour betokening the presence of the Empress still floated from the central tower of the Tuileries. While I was speaking, and

exactly at twenty minutes past three, I saw that flag taken down. That is an event in a man's life not to be forgotten. Crossing over the Pont de Solférino to the Quai d'Orsay, I witnessed an extraordinary sight indeed. From the windows of those great barracks, formerly peopled with troops every man of whom was supposed to be ready to die for his Emperor, I saw soldiers smiling, waving handkerchiefs, and responding to the cries of "Vive la République," raised by gendarmes, cavalry, soldiers of the line, National Guards, and people below. Well dressed ladies in open carriages shook hands with private soldiers and men in blouses, all crying, "Vive la République." Nay, strangers fell on each other's necks and kissed each other with "effusion." In the neighbourhood of the Pont Neuf I saw people on the tops of ladders busily pulling down the Emperor's bust, which the late loyalty of the people induced them to stick about in all possible and impossible places. I saw the busts carried in mock procession to the parapet of the Pont Neuf and thrown into the Seine; clapping of hands and hearty laughter greeting the splash which the graven image of the mighty monarch made in the water. I went as far as the Hôtel de Ville, and found it in possession of His Majesty the Sovereign People. Blouses were in every one of M. Haussmann's balconies. How they got there I do not know. I presume that M. Chevreau did not invite them. But they got in somehow without violence. The great square in front of the Hôtel de Ville was full of National Guards, most of them without uniform. They carried the butts of their muskets in the air, in token that they were fraternizing with the people. The most perfect good humour prevailed. Portraits of the Emperor and Empress, which many of your readers must have seen in the Hôtel de Ville ball-rooms, were thrown out of the window, and the people trod and danced upon the canvas. On leaving the Hôtel de Ville, I saw, in the Avenue Victoria, M. Henri Rochefort let out of prison, as a logical consequence of events, but half an hour before. He was on a triumphal car, and wore a scarlet scarf. He was escorted by an immense mob, crying, "Vive Rochefort!" He looked in far better health than I expected to see him after his long imprisonment, and his countenance beamed with delight. He has seen his desire on his enemy.

This bloodless revolution seems to have been thoroughly effected so far as Paris can do it, but I am not yet able to say precisely how effectually it has been done. The Senate, which, if the Republic proclaimed to-day holds its own, will be to-morrow but a set of elderly gentlemen lamenting over the loss of their positions, made a show of fighting this afternoon, and took

their stand as "illustrations of the Empire and guardians of the Constitution." A M. de Chabriat, as soon as M. Rouher took the chair, said that some deputies, forgetting their oath, had moved the deposition of the Emperor. They had no right to do this. He was vanquished and a prisoner, and he, the speaker, would pay a last homage to him, and cry, "Vive l'Empereur!" Several senators (there were not many of them present) cried, "Vive l'Empereur!" M. Rouher said very gallantly that any such vote as that which their colleagues had mentioned as likely to be sent up to them from the other House, would be firmly repudiated. He proposed an adjournment for two hours. At two o'clock the Senate met again, and then M. Rouher alluded to a proposal for the Emperor's abdication, moved by M. Jules Favre; but said, that inasmuch as the populace had broken into the Chamber, the vote amounted to nothing. A valiant senator exclaimed, "We are here by virtue of the Plébiscite, and we protest against force and violence." The Senate then agreed to adjourn, and I dare say it will never meet again. *Requiescat!* I said a great deal more harm of it when it was created in 1852 than I care to say now. In the Corps Législatif to-day, Count Palikao himself proposed the election of a sort of Provisional Government, but he himself was to have been at the head of it, and M. Thiers was to have been a member. Subsequently the Left, supported by the National Guard and the populace, who made a bloodless charge upon the line, and got into the Chamber, became so strong that all the Ministry, followed by most of the members of the Right, left the House, and the Opposition had it all its own way. At four o'clock the Republic was proclaimed at the Hôtel de Ville, with the following Provisional Government:—MM. Gambetta, Jules Favre, Pelletan, Rochefort, Jules Ferry, Jules Simon, Ernest Picard; Kératry, Prefect of Police; Arago, Mayor of Paris.

I cannot tell whether to-morrow this Government will be disputed by anybody; all I can say is, that to-night nobody disputes the Republic. The sergents de ville who yesterday fired a volley upon the procession which cried "Déchéance!" now keep themselves out of sight. The fraternization between the military and the people in the name of the Republic is so palpable and universal, that I do not think Count de Palikao could achieve a massacre if he cared to order one.

An old Republican journalist, whose patriotism is undoubted, said to me to-day, while sobbing with sorrow at the French reverses, "This proves that Pretorian soldiers are no match for free men." My friend is perhaps right so far, and there is much comfort in the thought. But I could not without hurting

his feelings say to him what I now say to your readers, that in my opinion the change in the form of government from an Empire to a Republic will not enable the French nation, after having lost the flower of its army, to resist the disciplined and hitherto victorious invaders. This, however, is not the French opinion, and it would not be safe to express it in any French society whatever. I am afraid that rivers of blood must yet flow before the impulsive French people become alive to this truth. It does not matter that many of the comparatively disciplined troops of MacMahon fled like sheep when the balls began to whistle about their ears. They have an intense belief in "France rising in its might," and fancy that the thousands of civilians now walking about the streets with guns in their hands, will do better than the trained soldiers who have been beaten under the best generals that France could produce. And yet when these men, whose trade is war, and who from training and *esprit de corps* will run risks of life which are to civilians incomprehensible, yield to stern necessity and surrender rather than die, the deluded citizens of Paris imagine that men having no military qualities or habits at all will die to the last man on the Paris fortifications rather than allow the serried legions of the Red Prince to parade the streets of Paris. A caricature of Gill in the "Eclipse" precisely represents the feeling of Paris at this moment. Paris, standing on her fortifications, is depicted by a female figure called Judith. Outside is the King of Prussia in the guise of Holofernes. Judith beckons to Holofernes, and says "Come here!" and the obvious moral is that if he listens to the voice of the charmer it will be all up with him. At eleven this evening Henri Rochefort passed in triumph all along the Boulevards. Soldiers of all arms marched behind him carrying lanterns. Who could have imagined such a scene when the first number of his *Lanterne* came out?

Before the new Ministers were settled in their places, they learned that the German armies which had fought at Sedan were already on their way to Paris, and it became necessary to provide at once for the defence of the capital. No more was heard of saving France by *pompiers*: the people themselves were immediately armed as far as the resources of the Minister of War would permit, and the completion of the fortifications was seriously taken in hand. It was too soon to think of creating a new field army. Metz, it was believed, might yet be saved by the valour and prudence of Bazaine. The city of Strasburg received honours in decrees, and in demonstrations before its allegorical statue in Paris, and Toul was declared to have deserved well of the country. But a Government whose members had formerly been

elected deputies by Paris held that its first duty was to the capital. It, however, at once gave freedom and an impulse to the military spirit of all France, such as the fallen Government had been afraid to venture on. The consequence was, that in scores of departments scenes might be encountered such as this, described by the Paris Correspondent on a journey through Western France:—

I arrived very late at the pretty little old Norman town of Alençon, and slept there. At seven in the morning I witnessed a scene, the counterpart of which was, I believe, going on in almost every town in France. The public promenade, a pretty triangular green bordered with chestnut trees, was covered as thickly as the great square in Chatham barracks at the same hour, with squads of recruits, going through various stages of primary drill. These were fair specimens of the levy *en masse* now going on throughout France, and which sanguine Frenchmen, especially Parisians, hope will destroy the Prussian invader without fail, even if the extinction of the regular army should be completed. The squads which I saw consisted of men of all ages and all ranks. The majority, of course, belonged to the humbler classes, but side by side with the blue blouse were many portly citizens clad in broadcloth. Some of them, at the ripe age of sixty, were learning the goose step for the first time. They had none of them either arms or uniform, and I doubt whether there are any arms in the town. But they very conscientiously went through the duty required of them by the drill sergeants of squaring their toes, keeping their heels together, doing right and left face, with as much unanimity as the stiff joints of some of the oldest among them permitted, and putting the left foot first on the word given, "The line will advance—mar-r-ch." The drill sergeants were all simple fellows, whose knowledge was derived from former service in the army. They wore their every-day working costume. One of them, a cook at an inn, drilled his squad in his white paper cap and cotton apron. A more characteristic type of a citizen soldier could not be seen. If this civic force of Alençon should persevere in the efforts which I saw for a month, they will certainly by that time be able to form four deep, wheel into line, and even form square very creditably. But if in the meantime, or even for a good while afterwards, four Prussian Uhlans should take a fancy to gallop into Alençon, as the inhabitants now grievously fear they will, I am afraid all the drilling will turn out of small avail for the defence of the town. It would be more to the purpose if, instead of all this scientific corporal's drill, the volunteers were to be at once put to ball-practice.

A good weapon, a good aim, and a good heart might do a good deal at a push, even if keeping step and marching shoulder to shoulder were left to the spur of the moment.

CHAPTER IX.

THE Third and Fourth German Armies had now their way open to Paris, for after the Army of the North, as that of MacMahon was called, had failed even more disastrously than the Army of the Rhine, France had no other to place in the field. But the distance to be traversed was great, and although the Germans took up their position before Paris fifteen days after their first corps had set out from Sedan, a fortnight seemed a long time to pass without some signal occurrence. The Crown Prince of Saxony moved along the valley of the Marne by Château Thierry and Meaux to Lagny, while the Crown Prince of Prussia advanced by Montmirail, Coulommiers, and Brie Comte Robert. The Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Prussia's army wrote from Montmirail, on the 12th of September :—

Montmirail is a small place when compared with the fine city of Rheims, through which I have passed on my way hither. In Rheims, with its glorious cathedral and its memories of Royal coronations, there is gloom and restraint. The enemy have taken possession of the city. King William himself is there. The King's head-quarters are established in the episcopal palace beside the cathedral, and the head-quarters of the Würtemberg Corps, which garrisons the city, are established in the hotel before the cathedral door. Officers come and go, horses clatter over the stones, and orderlies trot in and out with incessant bustle. But though there is plenty of life in one sense, yet Rheims is gloomy and restrained. The people do not like it, and they cannot prevent it. Here are enemies far milder than the invaders of 1814. I saw dozens of young women passing across the public square on their way to the cathedral, and they had no violence to fear. I saw shops open, which were receiving money payments for the purchases of the soldiery. But it is hard to be ordered about by strangers and enemies when we have been led to think ourselves beyond all attack. The mayor has to advise his townfolk earnestly to abstain from violence, and the Prussian authorities make such requisitions as they think necessary for the good of their service. These requisitions are made on the city, it is fair to add, and the private citizen has only to provide food for the soldiers actually quartered upon him. He need not let himself be bullied by

any chance soldier even out of a morsel of bread. King William has resolved that no irregular exactions shall cause the people greater suffering than the war must, perforce, inflict. It is difficult to prevent small irregularities and petty plundering, but these things press more harshly on country villages than on a city like Rheims, where His Majesty himself is quartered.

Whilst the rain poured in torrents on the gusty September days which followed the great victory, there was ceaseless trampling of mud and splashing up of muddy water in the town and on the battle-field of Sedan. Thousands came and went along the road to the Belgian frontier, until this same road, so quiet at ordinary times, was made the busiest of international thoroughfares. Thousands marched away towards Germany with heavy steps and grave downcast faces. These were the French prisoners. Who could say what foolish dreams of easy victory and of *promenades militaires* had floated through their heads a month before? They had misunderstood the case, they had been ill commanded and signally overthrown. But it was impossible not to pity the poor fellows as they went by in long mud-splashed columns, their gay uniforms utterly faded, their small relics of equipment carried with anxious care. Here was one with a saddle-cloth held over his shoulders to keep off the rain, and an empty cooking tin clutched in his other hand. Then came, perhaps, a couple whose great-coats were to the fore, but who had nothing else. Then a man fairly drenched in his uniform coat, yet with the rare luxury of a knapsack, and with the suspicion of a pair of boots therein. So they went by in never-ending columns. Batches of men in great distress from damp and hunger. Other batches seemingly more fortunate, better clothed, or, for some reason, better provided. The cavalry without their horses, the infantry without their heavy load of sack and coat, and tent, which is almost part of themselves.

There was dismal work to be done amid all the rain and mud of the days which followed the great victory. The dead were to be buried and the wounded were to be removed for fear of sickness. As late as the fourth day there were dozens of dead Frenchmen on the road between Sedan and Givonne, and it was not until the sixth day after the battle that the dead horses were seriously dealt with. So many men still living, but suffering great agony, claimed the care of all who could lend a helping hand, that to leave the dead unburied for awhile was as nothing in comparison. In the villages, on the battle-field itself, there was scarcely a foot of shelter to be found unoccupied. Every house had a garrison of wounded

men, and the doctors were busy with their drugs and their instruments working hard to relieve the sufferers. The red cross of the hospital assistants was to be seen in all directions. If there was a mass of sufferers to be helped and tended, there was also a widespread organization to bring them help. Wounded men were in the villages and in the town. They were taken over the Belgian frontier, to be conveyed away by rail to France or Germany. They were spread farther and farther, by slow degrees, from the spot where they had fallen, in order that there might be better means of caring for them and less chance of infection. It often seemed that common suffering and mutual helplessness had made the enemies of a few hours before quite forget their hostile attitude. I remember noticing on the morning after the battle, that Frenchmen and Germans limped along together in forlorn groups of twenty or a dozen, without the least sign of enmity, in fact with tolerable politeness one to another. These lightly-wounded men found their way to the rear at their own pace, often stopping to rest. You might have seen at times a soldier of either side chatting in broken fashion, by signs and stray words, to some soldiers, also wounded, of the other side. Or it would happen that the courtesies of a resting-place beside the road, of a sheltered corner, or grassy bank, were done with a simple nod and grunt of welcome by the first comers to the sometime enemy, who limped up with an imploring look. Between the unwounded prisoners and their guard it could not but be that roughness and jealousy should appear. The prisoners were sullen of mood, the guard put over them were disposed to try whether loud speaking would not make German clearly comprehended. But the wounded, conquerors and conquered, got on together excellently well. They had a fellow-feeling which made them almost friends.

All through the fertile province of Champagne, down the straight *chaussées*, with their lines of poplar trees, and among the pleasant villages on the vine-covered slopes, the Prussians have advanced towards Paris. There was a great bend to the northward when the Crown Prince swung round upon MacMahon and pinned him in against the Belgian frontier at Sedan. There was a momentary pause after the success of September—a pause merely to rest the exhausted troops, and then a second movement as decided and almost as rapid as that of the shutting in of MacMahon. The German forces returned to the main road to their promised goal. They came slanting back to the line of the Marne, and occupied village after village, town after town, with astonishing quickness. The French had no time to prepare a systematic defence. Before the National

Guard could even be armed, far less exercised, those fluttering pennants of black and white which told of the Prussian Lancers, or those spiked helmets of the Prussian Dragoons, were seen approaching. Everything had to be abandoned. The armed force, such as it was, dispersed or retreated, and the people submitted themselves to the inevitable in the way of war contributions. It has been such a flood of invasion as has been seldom seen in the history of the world. There has been the energy of some Teutonic inroad of the fifth century combined with the careful preparation of modern thought and science. The rough cavaliers who lead the way are indifferent to hardship and danger. With them it is a change from damp bivouacs one day, to snug quarters in a fine old château on the next. They take good and evil fortune as it happens to come, live well when they can, and frighten the inhabitants far more than they hurt them. Then follow the regular brigades and divisions, the artillery and ammunition, of the main army. Guns are dragged steadily forward, waggons block up the roads, whole fields and hill-sides are turned into camps, as the army advances. There is no delay in the rear. More and more waggons come streaming up from every dépôt of provisions. The field telegraph is brought into play as fast as possible, and the field hospitals are got ready, stage after stage, for the sick or wounded who may require help. To travel up to head-quarters when one has lingered a few days behind the great machine is a curious study. In some respects, it is painful to pass through a country so occupied and overwhelmed by soldiers. There are no blazing ruins to tell of an enemy's passage, no women complaining of outrage, no bodies of murdered men lying in the streets, as in bad old wars of other times. But there is a pitiful scarcity of food and a sullen tone of despair among the inhabitants. They have been eaten up, they say. Not a drop of wine is left, not a crust of bread. If this goes on much longer they must starve. Take any small village by the wayside. Let a force of hungry, thirsty men, march through such village, and the result is certain. Food will be devoured, liquor will disappear, the people will groan over their losses, as well they may, poor souls! Yet with remembrance of what has been in war, and of what might be again, these villagers are rather to be congratulated that they live in times like ours. The dreaded foe has been among them, and this is all that has been done.

To travel up from the rear to the front of the invading army gives a better notion of the vast scale of the operations against Paris than any one sight along the front. These whole districts occupied by foreign troops, these different corps scattered over

the country, far and wide, are deeply suggestive. Since Louis Napoleon was captured at Sedan, and eighty-six thousand unwounded prisoners were taken, there has been nothing to shield Paris from attack save time and distance. General Vinoy, however brave and skilful, cannot attempt the task; he can only concentrate his small force to defend the city. There will be no serious fighting, it is thought, until the Prussians are actually at St. Denis or Vincennes. It is out of the question for the French to risk a battle in the open field with their raw levies against King William's veterans. Marvellous change of position! Incredible overturn of power! Here is unhappy France too weak to take the field, too proud, it is to be feared, to submit to her hard fate. The splendid regiments which should have protected her capital, the Zouaves and Chasseurs-à-pied, the Grenadiers of the Guard, and the dark-faced Turcos, are slaughtered or imprisoned. Some are shut up in Metz, some have tramped away through the rain and mud from Sedan under the escort of Bavarian cavalry. Never was a stranger confusion of misfortunes than the capture of the Emperor away from his Guard—the Emperor in Sedan, the Guard in Metz—and the leaving of Paris utterly exposed, whilst France is still eager to resist any dismemberment.

If we look round to see how the game must now be played, we find that the Germans are advancing in open order over the whole country to the west of the capital. Their force is well in hand, and could be collected at a day's notice. But as France is paralyzed for the time, it is better, for the comfort and nourishment of the troops, to move in open order. You will probably hear of a move to the southward of Paris, just as there has been a move to the southward of Metz, and of the army of MacMahon at Sedan. When Paris is cut off from the rest of France, when its water supply is stopped and its immense population is threatened with famine, there will be a question of surrender. Already the Prussian light horsemen are working round on both flanks, and they are expected to cut the last remaining railway line in another day. It is not thought that heavy guns will be brought up to batter the French defences, because the city is to be reduced by a blockade rather than by a siege.

The château of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld has been the Crown Prince's head-quarters in Montmirail, a spacious building, handsomely furnished. This château is one of the best quarters that His Royal Highness has had since the beginning of the war. There is a large park-like garden with well-grown timber, and with a beautiful view across the neighbouring valley. The fact of foreign conquest and foreign occupation is best realized

when Prussian helmets and Prussian uniforms are seen in these stately dwellings of the French nobility. There can be no doubt about it. Here are the invaders in the very midst of French life, in the very richest parts of *La Belle France*. On yonder hill is the monument to the battle of Montmirail in 1814. Napoleon I. surprised the Prussians and defeated them with great loss. I have spoken with an old peasant who remembers the fight. "Ah!" says he, "it was a victory for us that time, sir; Napoleon was there." And then, as if to prevent any mistake, he adds: "Napoleon the First, I mean. You know, he could beat the Prussians." Poor old peasant! 'tis a sorry comfort.

From Coulommiers the same Correspondent wrote, on the 16th of September:—

Since I wrote to you from the little town of Montmirail, our last halting-place, twenty-four miles have been struck off the short distance to the French capital. In another twenty-four miles we shall be almost within range of the outlying forts. Two more such marches would bring us to the region of Versailles. The plot thickens day by day, and there is no doubt but that the coil of the blockade is about to be tightly drawn round the doomed city. King William has come from Rheims to Château Thierry, and will be in Meaux either to-morrow or on Sunday, whilst the Crown Prince moves more to the southward, thrusting his forces between Paris and the rest of France. Within a week the blockade will be as complete as so vast a circle will admit. Every possible avenue of approach will be threatened by the Germans, and most of them will be strongly occupied. The French Government will have to abandon its capital for fear of being cut off from France without the walls, or to abandon France without the walls that it may superintend the defence of the capital. You may, perhaps, hear that General Vinoy, or some other French commander, is manœuvring to the southward of the German line, to draw away the assailants from Paris. But unless he can turn the tide of success which has borne the Germans forward thus far into the heart of France, he will only waste his efforts in a vain attempt. Paris is not to be besieged. No heavy guns are to be brought against it, no batteries erected. The intolerable loss and discomfort of a blockade, however roughly maintained, is thought enough to bring the capital to terms. If there were nothing but troops of lancers threatening the railways and cutting off a supply of fruit from the neighbouring gardens, a city like Paris would soon be ruined. Add the whole deprivation that threatening the railways must produce, and you have a sum of

misery which it would require dauntless heroism to endure. The Germans need never come within sight of the ramparts. They may content themselves with marching and counter-marching in the suburban districts, and Paris will still be at their mercy. I know how many of your readers have questioned anxiously whether there was danger of destruction to the monuments they have so often admired, whether the gay busy capital of France would actually be bombarded and taken by storm. As far as now appears, I can answer them that neither bombardment nor assault is a likely event, but that an equally deadly pressure will be brought to bear by means of a distant blockade.

The German line of march in the very heart of France is a curious historical study. Groups of fine strapping fellows, of from thirty to fifty years of age, lounge about the corners of the village streets, or stand half awed, half defiant, in the doors of the houses. They are just such material as ought to be in a French Landwehr. But they have neither weapons nor drill. Some have served in the regular army, and these scowl most fiercely at the invaders, yet even these are utterly unprepared and out of training. The uniform coat has so long given place to the blouse, that they have slipped back into their native condition of peaceful cultivators of the soil. Monsieur le Maire, or Monsieur le Curé, has them always under his eye. They are safe, quiet bodies, who could no more get up a guerilla war than could a village full of our English rustics. We hear about Francs-tireurs, and desperate deeds to be done to every foreigner who ventures out alone. But, to their honour be it said, the French peasants take very slowly to such ways. I have heard of cases of "bushwhacking," and I am aware that some roads are far from safe. This is the most that I can say on the dangerous side. On the other side—or the side of painting things in tamer colours—it is certain that as a whole the war is not a war of partisans, of ambushades and surprises. The one great surprise has been that of the French nation from first to last, and being surprised, outdone, and marched over, this French nation takes its sufferings with patient logic. *A la guerre comme à la guerre*, as I have before said, is the great motto of the time. Monsieur le Maire advises his people to pay the contributions quietly, though this particular Maire of Coulommiers is under arrest for failing to do so. Monsieur le Curé stands by his flock in the hour of trouble—comforts and encourages them to bear what must be borne; and the villages are spared the additional troubles of martial law and fierce retaliation. It is only a few days ago that I saw General von Moltke driving into Rheims late in the day, quite alone in a

carriage, with no escort of any kind. At another time I saw one Prussian soldier on foot calmly halting in a village full of Frenchmen, to light his pipe at the inn-door.

A Special Correspondent (afterwards the Correspondent at Metz) wrote at this time from Meaux, the temporary head-quarters of a Corps of the Crown Prince of Saxony's army:—

The white fog so characteristic of the Marne valley was still hanging over the pretty town of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, when about half-past four in the morning of Thursday, the 15th instant, I drove over the quaint old bridge on my road forward to Meaux. All round me lay the 6th Army Corps of the Prussian army, the honest fellows still slumbering soundly in the semi-darkness. His Excellency von Tümpling, the General in command of this Army Corps, had come on with his headquarters on the previous day from Nogent, and a further advance to Meaux was ordered for Thursday. This 6th Army Corps, composed almost exclusively of Silesians, has throughout formed the front of the advance on Paris, and its head-quarters have ever been very close in the rear of the extreme infantry vanguard. Thus it fell out that, as I drove forward through the fog, there were but few signs of my having been preceded by any large body of men. As day broke, the soft roadsides showed tokens of having been trodden by a goodly force of cavalry, and the hoof-prints had not been beaten out, as they invariably are when the infantry men have come tramping after the horsemen. I had not travelled above five miles when I came to a village occupied by a company of the 51st Regiment, and when I knew for certain that I must be very close indeed to the fringe of the infantry advance, since that regiment has formed the outposts throughout the advance. Two miles farther on, still in the thick fog, I reached the village of Trilport, about three miles from Meaux, and here, too, were a few men of the 51st and a slender guard in front of the Mairie. The sentry shouted something unintelligible as I passed him—it was not “Halt,” and so I did not care to pull up. But when I had traversed quite half the fine bridge which forms a continuation of the little town, a “Halt!” in loud and peremptory tones, came from a dim figure half obscured by the fog. It came again still sharper and louder as I continued to advance, my horse having a good deal of way on him. Then the figure stretched out an arm, and, snatching the bridle, sent the animal back on his haunches, shouting as he did so, “Donnerwetter! can't you see the bridge is down?” Down it certainly was, and very considerably down, too, should I have been in the fog. The arch nearest Meaux, one of considerable span, had been

utterly shattered by gunpowder, and the débris lay in the water, creating quite a tempestuous little rapid. As I was thanking and questioning the sentry, a gust of wind suddenly swept the fog away, and there became visible, two hundred yards or so up stream, the wreck of a noble railway bridge, all three arches of which had been blown up. Gaunt and grim stood the shattered arches in the sombre light of the morning, contrasting strangely in the sullen ruin of their appearance with the busy scene in the intervening space. The pioneers of the 51st were just finishing a bridge which they had hastily improvised. A pontoon train was hourly expected, but meanwhile the pioneers with their axes had constructed a very creditable pile bridge. Now they were causewaying the approaches to the timber platform with grassy sods sliced from the bank. It was good to see the system and purpose with which every one worked. An officer stood by formally to superintend operations, but he seldom needed to take the cigar from his mouth to utter an order. The division-of-labour principle was carried out to its fullest extent, and the result was speed, order, and efficiency. As a special favour, this gentleman permitted my carriage to cross before the bridge was quite finished, and in advance of a battery of artillery, the horses of which were champing their bits with impatience at the halt in the chill morning air.

The broken bridges on the Marne, at Trilport, were not the only obstacles which the French engineers had attempted to interpose between the Prussians and Meaux. On the previous day I had found a tunnel at Nanteuil blown in, and so blocked up that the labour of reconstructing it must almost equal that of the original construction. Had all the French operations on this line been as thorough as this, the Prussians would undoubtedly have been inconvenienced and their advance might have been materially delayed. But the engineers must either have been consummately stupid or have built largely on a supposititious stupidity on the part of the Prussians. When they destroyed the bridges in the direct line, they invariably left standing some convenient substitute capable of being utilized by the easy expedient of going a few hundred yards either right or left. Thus a mile beyond the Trilport ruin a bridge on the canal had also been destroyed. But a wily Uhlan had ridden down the towing-path till he came to a handy if rather narrow wooden structure about half a mile to the left, and had then come back on to the *chaussée*, and chalked on a convenient post the laconic but intelligible word "Links." "Links" (left) I went accordingly, crossed the canal, and reached the outskirts of Meaux, where I found another bridge down. This time

the direction was "Rechts," and obedience to it soon brought me into the town, where I found nothing but a regiment of hussars and a few sergeants who had come on in advance to take up quarters in the town and the neighbouring villages for the troops. The nights are getting very cold, and rheumatism is not so rare as it was a month ago in the Prussian ranks, therefore it is wisely made an object to billet the troops if possible under cover of some kind. The 38th Regiment was the only one on account of which nobody was looking out for quarters. This corps had been making itself a little too free and easy in the requisition line, and General von Tümppling had punished the peccadillo by ordering them into bivouac for three nights, suspending also for the same time their right to require anything. In the course of the afternoon, the whole of the 6th Army Corps arrived in the neighbourhood of Meaux; comparatively few men, however, being quartered in the town itself, in anticipation of the accommodation requisite for Royal headquarters, which were coming from Château Thierry next day. General von Tümppling had his head-quarters at Quincy Segy, a little village with a beautiful château, about six kilomètres to the south of Meaux, but divided from it by a more serious obstacle than the trivial distance, in the shape of a destroyed bridge on a branch of the canal. A Jäger regiment formed the infantry foreposts in a line of villages, the centre of which was Claye, about five miles to the front, and the 5th Army Corps' advance guard lay around Coulommiers, considerably to the left rear. What was to the north, except vaguely that there were both Prussians and Saxons, I was not able to learn. The 8th and 9th Regiments of hussars were on patrol and vedette duty out to the front of the Jägers.

Yesterday morning, while riding out to the cavalry foreposts in company with one of the hussar officers, we suddenly came, on the great road in front of Claye, on a little posse of French lancers, following a civilian who carried a white flag. On the top of a little knoll the lancers halted, and then retreated, leaving the "parlementaire" to come forward alone. When he came within hail we learned that he was the Second Secretary of the British Legation in Paris, and the bearer of a communication from Lord Lyons to Count Bismarck. He got a mount from one of the hussars, who vacated his saddle for the purpose, and was escorted into the camp by a sergeant and a couple of men.

Great interest was naturally excited among the German troops when the news spread of the advent of a "parlementaire." A report had been current a couple of days before that the defence of Paris was abandoned, and although that had been contra-

dicted, a widespread belief existed that the Parisians were not prepared, when confronted with the actual realities of a siege, to let the matter go to extremities. The arrival of the English secretary was accepted as in support of this view, and everybody was anxious for the King and Bismarck to come on towards the front. The Royal head-quarters arrived early in the afternoon, but no information oozed out as to what may be termed the general public of the army respecting the nature of the communication brought by the bearer of the flag of truce; and attention was somewhat distracted from the subject by the pushing forward to the south-west of a large portion of the 6th Army Corps. I learned, however, in the course of the evening, from a trustworthy source, that Mr. Malet was the bearer of a communication emanating, in the first instance, from Lord Granville, having for its object a proposal relative to mediation. Mr. Malet was courteous enough to give a few details regarding the incidents of his journey from the capital to the Prussian foreposts. He spent a night on the road, and the Gardes Mobiles where he halted made the cheerful suggestion that he should sleep "under the beautiful stars!" Mr. Malet, reserving the question whether he would have any objection to sleep "under the beautiful stars," if they were visible, pointed out the fact that they were not, and requested other sleeping accommodation than that afforded by the earth as a mattress and the sky as a canopy. This he ultimately obtained, his escort sleeping in the adjoining shed.

Mr. Malet returned towards Paris in the course of this morning, leaving in the same way as he had come, under an escort of Prussian hussars. Those who knew the nature of the risk he ran, felt considerable apprehension for his safety. In the course of the morning, the French had fired upon two flags of truce, and it was just a chance if Mr. Malet should be recognized. However, he got among the defenders of Paris without detriment, and I trust reached the Embassy in safety.

From Rheims, the same Special Correspondent wrote on the 18th:—

I quitted Meaux early on the forenoon of the 17th on my return journey, and took the road of the broken bridges, to avoid the constant stream of artillery and infantry which was pouring down the hill into Meaux on the road *viâ* Lisy. I found the former road very quiet. The bridges over the canals had already been repaired, but the Marne was still crossed by the pile bridge, although there was an alternative pontoon lower down the stream. No attempt had been made to repair the great bridge over the Marne. Some little distance on the

Meaux side of La Férté I encountered the advance of the 2nd Bavarian Corps, and when I got into the suburbs of the town I found my passage on the direct road quite blocked by a double stream of gun-carriages. A good map and an eye for topography are of great advantage in such circumstances. I happen not to be badly off for either, and I struck off to the right on the road to Montmirail till I came to a cross road, which brought me down again into the valley of the Seine upon Nogent, right into the rear of the Bavarians. There were no troops on this road, but it had been extensively traversed during the few preceding days, and the people were only just beginning to return to their homes. In a forest about three miles out of La Férté, the retreating French had cut down a number of trees and blocked the road with them, but the obstacle had been shoved on one side by the Prussians. The villagers were very timid and, I may add, very hungry, all along this road, but it was wonderful how little damage the Prussians had done during their transit. The poultry still strutted about the road through the village, and there was hardly a broken pane of glass to be seen. Furniture and valuables the people had secreted before the troops had come upon them, and all the chief injury seemed to have been sustained by the straw stacks, upon which the men had drawn freely to make beds wherewithal in the empty houses. Over Nogent the wave had passed a little earlier, and the place had proportionately recovered more. I had no difficulty in getting a fair dinner there, nor in procuring a bottle of champagne—my coachman got corn for my horse by paying for it, and meat, both beef and mutton, was hanging in the open butcher's shop. All the way to Château-Thierry was visible the eager desire of the peasantry and farmers to overtake temporarily arrested agricultural labour. Except for the occasional traces of a bivouac, and now and then a broken-down vine-stem, there was no evidence that a vast army had so recently traversed this road. The children played around the doors beside the old crones at their knitting, the men and women were in the fields working with a clumsy assiduity, and it seemed to me not uncheerfully. The vine-pickers were in the vineyards, filling their creels with the great clusters of somewhat over-ripe grapes; but their number was, no doubt, smaller than it would have been if peace had reigned in the land. There were cattle in the pastures and horses at the plough and between the shafts of the carts. I do not think any one not aware of the fact could have gathered, from outward appearance, that anything of exceptional importance had recently occurred in the beautiful and smiling valley. In Château-Thierry were a handful of Bavarian bullock-drivers

and a few footsore infantry men. The people of this beautiful town never forsook it in numbers so great as had the inhabitants of some other places; nor had they any reason to repent of their courage. Now it seemed as if they had fallen again into the somnolent routine of a provincial town. The burghers gossiped on the pavement, the young ladies promenaded in the avenues of noble trees, the lads squatted on the brink of the Marne, angling with a lazy pertinacity. The Hôtel de l'Eléphant was empty: *quantum mutatus* from that Elephant which I had seen a few days before, when Von Tümpling's Staff were buzzing the bottles in the *salle à manger*, and the cook was in a white heat at the multiplicity of orders. The landlord, a gentleman himself of the elephantine pattern, confided to me, with a sage wag of the head, that he would be heartily glad to see the Prussians come back to stop as long as they could make it convenient, for they were the best customers he had ever had, never grumbled, and invariably rejected red wine for champagne, for which they paid promptly the price demanded. Of course, he spoke of officers.

I remained overnight at Dormans, a large village about ten miles farther on. Here I found a considerable number of Prussians, but no regular force—only sick and convalescents, and stragglers, chiefly belonging to the 63rd Regiment. Neither here did I find any misery. At the same hotel where I had found quarters on the advance, I got everything I could reasonably want, and the disconsolateness of Madame only proceeded from the circumstance that she had a son in MacMahon's Chasseurs de France, of whose fate at Sedan she knew nothing. The shops were all open, and the show in the windows was by no means despicable. Neither could the requisition for horses and vehicles have been exhaustive, for I had not the slightest difficulty in procuring a relay carriage and horse forward to Rheims. Perhaps, however, the fact that the landlord of the Hôtel de France had some previous acquaintance with the habit Britons have of paying their way, may have had some effect in contributing to this promptitude, for he produced his horse out of a recondite locality which it would have puzzled a detective to discover, and in which he had two more animals lying *perdus*.

This morning, in and about Ville en Tardenoise, which is about half way to Rheims, I met and passed the whole of the 11th Army Corps on its march to the front. The men looked fresh and well, and the horses in capital condition; but the ranks were considerably thinner than before that terrible struggle on the plateau above Floing. I was informed that the 11th expected to go to the northward of Paris. Rheims was occupied

by a division of Bavarians and another of Saxons. Although this town was in a state of remarkable ferment on the occasion of the first entry of the Prussians, it got used to the situation in a very short time, and now it looked as if the Prussian occupation was a thing from time immemorial. It was Sunday, and citizens and Bavarians were streaming out of the noble old cathedral and the various churches of the city in all the apparent friendliness of fellow-worshippers. Among the poorer classes in Rheims there has been considerable hardship, owing to the dearness of provisions and the obligation incumbent on them of providing food for the soldiers billeted on them. The Prussian authorities have, however, averted further distress from this source, by establishing a commissariat for troops billeted on all those unable to support them. The old Champagne city is very wealthy, and the rich in its community might not unnaturally be expected to do something for their less well-to-do townsmen. But there seems to be no great development of enthusiasm in this direction.

From Libramont, the same Correspondent wrote, on the 20th of September:—

The people are gradually coming back to Flize, Dom de Mesnil, and Fernois, the three villages between Boulzicourt and Sedan. In Flize there must be plenty of wine as well as plenty to drink it, for the *auberge* was crammed with the blue blouses. The females of the families had fallen into the old familiar way of sitting knitting in the sunshine outside their doors. But many houses were still closed up, and here and there was the blackened skeleton of a roofless house, a grim memorial of the hot shell-fire. Over against Donchery the peasants were fishing the dead bodies out of the Meuse, and burying them in great holes. It is impossible to describe the emotions which almost every step of this road called up in my mind—associated as it was with events fixed so indelibly in my memory. Here was the little house at which I had seen Napoleon alight from his carriage on the morning of the 2nd September. A child was playing on the spot where the Emperor and Bismarck sat in that earnest colloquy of theirs which I watched so intently. A woman was spreading clothes on the path in the potato plot, up and down which I had seen the ruined man moodily pacing as he tugged his dishevelled moustache, after Bismarck had drawn the white cap with the yellow band down over his eyes, and posted off to take counsel with his master. A short kilomètre farther on, and I was in the village of Fernois, where I had left for a day a collection of cavalry swords collected from the battle, to return and find the place wrecked,

and the weapons gone. To the left was the ruined railway bridge over the Meuse. In my immediate front was the Château Bellevue, in the garden of which I had seen the perturbed meeting of the monarchs—Napoleon bowing low to hide the working of his face; Wilhelm studying not to hide his emotion. Away across the low alluvial plain and the sweep of the river, that ghastly *schlachtfeld* sloped upward from the low bluffs, now brown and bare, but, when I saw it once before, a fearful space in which surged to and fro, in the gaps of the white smoke, the heaving masses of maddened combatants—when I saw it yet again a ghastly expanse of death, here chequered with dead grey horses and with gay-clad dead riders, there flecked with the more sombre uniforms of the Prussian corpses lying thick where the mitrailleuse hail had beaten King Wilhelm's infantrymen to the earth. Below it was the island with the château in its centre, on to which I had seen the ceaseless stream of French prisoners pouring on the 3rd—the once gay gardens of the château now bare, and the trees stripped of their foliage. There was the little nook where a genial group of Zouaves had insisted on my joining in their supper of potatoes and horse-flesh, and there was the secluded path where the villanous Turco tried to steal my telescope. And farther to my right there lay Sedan, within whose walls I had penetrated before the ratification of the capitulation, to witness a sight of misery, chaos, disorganization, and general devilry, which assuredly was unique in this century—an eddying sea of humanity, men trampling recklessly over the dead and the wounded, now yelling for the blood of their officers, now struggling in fierce contention for a morsel of bread. And still farther to the right I could see through my glass the blackened ruins of Bazeilles, in the streets of which I had seen heaps of Bavarian and French dead piled in inextricable ravelment, and where I had seen the charred corpses of the women and the tender little ones—a sight I dream of to this day, and wake in a cold sweat of horror.

Sedan has been put in a state of siege, and the circumstance has been attributed, in my hearing, to an apprehension by the military authorities of a conspiracy on the part of the civilian population to rise. The true reason for the step is creditable to the Prussian administration. It was taken with a view to putting a stop to thieving and burglary, for which, where there are still so many untenanted houses, and while a considerable amount of floating rascaldom (chiefly Belgian) is haunting the place, there were great facilities. Under the badge of the red cross, scoundrels circulate freely who are capable of anything, from robbing a widow to butchering a wounded man for the

sake of the three groschen in his pocket. It was a mistake of the Prussians to have taken away, with the advance of the army, the whole of that most useful, promptly-resolute, and thoroughly trustworthy body of men—the field gendarmerie. I saw fellows prowling about Sedan, wearing the red cross, whom I would cheerfully hang up to the nearest tree without any further evidence than their hang-dog faces and sneaking manner. For the credit of the badge, something should be done to purge it of these ruffians, and also to prevent its adoption by every dilettante sightseer, whose sole object in visiting Sedan is to see the scene of the battle and prig a dead man's knapsack or helmet (all the more precious relic if it has blood upon it), to delight wherewithal the gaping domestic circle in some London suburb. I witnessed another phase of what I may call the red-cross mania on the road between Bouillon and Libramont. About four-and-twenty Belgians, in a kind of uniform, and carrying knapsacks, were plodding steadily along the road; one of the number bore aloft a banner, while in the van strutted a drummer, beating a rub-a-dub. For the life of me I could not extract from any member of the party their object in going to Libramont. They had marched with equal want of purpose to Bouillon the day before, and for aught I know may continue the same ridiculous seesaw till their boots are worn out, or their feet are sore. Under the red cross there is many a right-feeling heart and tender hand; there are men whom to think of is to think of devotion to the death, of a self-abnegation which is nobler than the most splendid valour on the battle-field; but there skulks under it, too, many a rascal for whom a pistol-bullet is a robbery of the hangman, and it were well if the thrice-rotten chaff could be winnowed out from among the sterling wheat.

When I was last at Bouillon I slept in a hayloft, because every shred of accommodation was monopolized by wounded, by French and Prussian officers who had straggled over the frontier, by "flightings," and by the valorous but uncommonly shoddy-looking Belgian troops. That was the day but one after the battle of Sedan. On this occasion I had to sleep in a waggon, because of the horde of red-cross men and sightseers. This morning I came on to Libramont *summá diligentíá*, on the top of the most primeval concern on wheels I have ever seen. Here I met Mr. Furley, who had just returned from a roving journey among the hospitals as far as Saarbruck, and whose report was not dispiriting. I also met Major Campbell and another gentleman, who had been attempting to ascertain the last resting-place of poor Colonel Pemberton. Their efforts had not been crowned with success. All that his sorrowing

relatives and friends can know is, that he lies on the battle-field with men as brave as himself around him on every side. They ascertained that he had been buried alone, but the precise spot they could not discover.

Before concluding a letter which I fear you will consider of undue length, I would guard myself against a misconception which what I have written might otherwise engender. I have described the condition of the population of Champagne as I saw it. The red seal of war has not imprinted itself very deeply on the people of that territory. But it is different with the wretched inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine. Of the miserable condition of the people of the latter province, I can speak of my own knowledge; as regards Alsace, I make the statement from the testimony of Prussian officers and clergymen, who have often lamented in my presence what they could not alleviate. Over them the wave has not passed and left them, hurt indeed, but not ruined; it has rested and is resting upon them, and their condition must by this time be terrible. God knows it was bad enough before all the dead at Gravelotte were buried.

The armies of Germany were now drawing near to the capital of France. On the 18th of September the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia were at Chaumes, from which town the Special Correspondent with the Prince wrote:—

Our march hither has been an important move towards Paris.

The Crown Prince has now his head-quarters within twenty-five miles of the outworks of the capital, and is advancing to the southward of the French position, as though to turn their right and shut them in after the manner of Metz and Sedan. We do not know whether any force will be found to dispute this southward march, and it is not safe to hazard a conjecture as to the future operations of an opponent so embarrassed as is the French Government. All that can be said with certainty is, that we are now so near as to make the passage of the Seine the next stage of our journey. The King's head-quarters are at Meaux, and the country towards Chantilly is said to be scoured by the German cavalry. There was no sign of ruin or devastation along the road from Coulommiers to Chaumes. Villages were to be seen in which the people gathered eagerly to watch the column on its way; other villages in which they took no notice, as if weary of seeing soldiers pass. But the houses were not injured, and men were working in the fields at some places. We had lovely weather. The bright uniforms of the Staff looked most picturesque under the flickering shade of the trees by the roadside, and the fleeci-est of white

clouds were flying overhead. At one point, where there was a halt for a quarter of an hour or so, we found a fine country house left in charge of the owner's servants, and the gardener brought out a basket of fruit for the Prince and his officers. We might have been in a friendly province on a tour of inspection for aught that appeared, save only the gloomy dejected looks of most of the inhabitants.

After finding so many places along our line of march almost destitute of food, it is an agreeable change to come upon a small town where bread is still exposed for sale at the baker's, and meat at the butcher's shop. There was a pretty good supply of provisions at Montmirail, but the supply in Coulommiers seemed more to approach the ordinary state of trade. Bread and meat for sale! You must see a village which has been eaten up, by the mere passage of thousands of soldiers through it, before you can realize the comfort of having the baker and butcher to the fore. When a large body of men has overweighted the resources of a particular spot, you will soon see shops that may contain provisions guarded by sentries, and denied to common use, or utterly cleared out and deserted, as the case may be.

Corbeil was reached on the following day, September 19th:—

We have come to the Seine, and passed it by a bridge of boats. There was a fine stone bridge across the river at Corbeil, but the French authorities, with mistaken energy, blew it up in order to delay their invaders for an hour, and the pontoon train had to be called in to make the passage good. Over quivering planks, with a side rope on either hand, we entered this sad-looking town. The shops are shut, the people are utterly astounded by what has happened, and many a chip and fragment has been knocked off the surrounding houses by the force of the explosion. There lies the ruined bridge, half covered by the river. One portion still remains intact, that to the eastern side; and a group of soldiers is collected on the edge of the broken roadway, staring down into the stream.

No resistance was offered when the Germans approached; there were some Franches-tireurs in Corbeil who saw to the blowing up of the bridge, and then retreated towards Paris. But no regular garrison was in the town, and the passage of the Seine was not disputed. It appears that corn barges were still floating down to the capital when the Prussian Lancers came in sight, and the mine was sprung. Paris was being supplied with food up to the latest possible moment, the Republicans were preparing for their intended defence, and every day was of importance. Yet the fine stone bridge across the Seine was a heavy

price to pay for an hour's delay. So it may be said of the cutting down of a good number of trees on our line of march from Chaumes to Corbeil. There has been nothing of this sort in Eastern France; there was only one small trace of such work between Montmirail and Coulommiers, and none between Coulommiers and Chaumes. But on our march hither we saw dozens of fine trees which had been chopped down to obstruct the thoroughfare. In a country like France, where trees on the roadsides are as much a matter of course as hedges in England, it is easy to do any amount of tree-felling across the road. The question is, will such tree-felling be of practical use? In case of fighting then and there, it undoubtedly might be; but when the obstructions are left to take care of themselves—that is to say, to be promptly pushed aside—they are not worth the waste of timber. I was reckoning to-day that it must have taken the Frenchmen longer to block the road than it took the Germans to clear it. The Frenchmen had the heavier task of the two. As we rode by we could see the trees which they had half cut and abandoned, the trees which they had just begun to cut, and others which had fallen outwards on to the field instead of inwards on to the road in the hurry of the final effort. At one place there had been a great breaking up of the roadway itself, and a gang of peasants in blouses was busy with the needful repair. How those luckless peasants must have cursed the mistaken energy of their rulers!

Though yesterday's march to Corbeil showed these signs of obstruction, in the way of felling timber, it showed no sign of any armed resistance. The caps and knapsacks, the dead horses and wounded prisoners of a successful skirmish were not visible, and the aspect of the ground told its own tale of a complete abandonment of the obstructions as soon as they were effected. The villages were chalked over their doors, which looked like plenty of quartering of troops, and some of them were full of soldiers. But there was no panic, no desolation. We passed men at work on their fields, and men gathered beside the road to see the Prince and his Staff. Here were a score of children peeping curiously through the garden railings at all the fine horses that clattered past. There, farther along, were other children, half a dozen or more, tumbling among the wheatsheaves which the soldiers had flung down from the newly-made rick to improve their bivouac the night before. What an upsetting, and what a waste of work there is in war-time! Yet what an escape the farmer must have thought it to lose only a few sheaves, if he had the notions of fire and sword which I find common among the people in regard to foreign invaders!

The river flows so quietly on that it is difficult to imagine the scenes of fierce excitement into which it presently glides. That broken bridge, the pontoons moored across the stream, and the columns of ammunition waggons rumbling through the town, give an idea that war is at hand. But the river goes quietly on, with a broad, smooth surface. The shadows lengthen, and the murmur from the shore echoes from side to side. We are some of us to the eastward, some of us to the westward of the Seine. The Crown Prince is quartered in a handsome château in St. Germain, the eastern suburb, and most of the officers on his Staff are in the town of Corbeil, to the westward of the river. The army has made good its passage of the Seine, and is ready to operate to the southward of Paris.

Whilst we were trotting forward yesterday morning from Chaumes an accident occurred which might have had very serious consequences. The young Prince of Mecklenburg, nephew to our Duke of Cambridge, one of the most dashing and active of the Staff, fell with his horse and was much bruised and shaken. He stood a good chance of being ridden over, as the column came thundering on. But it turned out to be no worse than a heavy fall without broken bones, and the Prince, who had been placed in a carriage, refused to own that he was much hurt. Just for the time, whilst his Highness was down among the horses' feet, it seemed that he must be smashed to pieces: but there is a wonderful chance about falling. I have known a man break his neck with much greater ease.

By the 20th of September the Third Army had finished its long march. The head-quarters of the Crown Prince, its commander, were at Versailles. The Special Correspondent who had accompanied it from Wörth to Sedan, and from Sedan to Paris, wrote at that date:—

The fortune of war has brought the Prussians to the Hampton Court of the French capital—has placed them at the very gates of Paris. I need say no further word to make the situation more striking. Here are the dark blue uniforms and the spiked helmets in the stately avenues of Versailles. The barracks of the Imperial Guard give ample quarters to King William's soldiery, and there have been found immense stores of hay and oats, which will make the Prussian horses fat, if only rest enough be given them for feeding.

Whilst we were advancing yesterday from Corbeil to Palaiseau there was a constant rumbling of artillery fire to our right front, and about mid-day the sharp rattle of musketry could be clearly distinguished. We knew that a fight of some sort must be going forward. But it was not until the shadows were

lengthening, and until the sounds of firing had almost died away, that the details of what had been done were brought to head-quarters. A sortie made by the French upon the line of march of the 5th Prussian Corps d'Armée had been at first so far successful that the Prussians were hotly engaged and impeded in their march. Then the 2nd Bavarian Corps, also of the Crown Prince's army, had come up and inclined the balance of advantage to the German side. The French had been driven back into Paris, nine guns had been taken, and a most important outwork on the hill behind Châtillon had been occupied by the Bavarians. The result of the day's fighting was to leave completely open the whole country to the southward of the capital, insomuch that the German cavalry had advanced to St. Cloud, that Versailles had surrendered, and that the hostile occupation had extended from the Seine on one side of Paris to the Seine on the other side, in an unbroken chain.

Such was the result of the memorable 19th of September, a day which must have brought home the war to the Parisians as no other day of this campaign has yet done. They had heavy firing in their immediate front—a battle, as it were, on Sydenham Hill, with the enemy extending his left flank towards Clapham Junction. This is putting the case in English guise, to make it doubly clear. The danger to Paris is so pressing that the places which I have mentioned do not inaptly suggest the state of things. Yesterday's battle was fought on a hill nearer to Paris than is Sydenham Hill to the centre of London. When the redoubt behind Châtillon was occupied there was a full view of Paris, the city being spread out like a map at the feet of the victorious Bavarians. There it lay, the great, beautiful city, spread, in a mass of white houses, for miles to the northward. We could realize this better when the Prince rode out to-day to view the position: But it was known yesterday evening that the 5th Corps and the Bavarians had gone very near to Paris. At our quarters, in the almost deserted village of Palaiseau, we heard orderlies and aides-de-camp galloping to the Prince with news. There was news from Châtillon and news from Versailles. All had gone well—the army had taken up its position firmly to the south of Paris, and the desperate effort of the French to check the forward movement had been repulsed.

Early this morning the whole Staff was on its way to the hill from which Paris could be seen. Whilst the baggage and the travelling carriages of head-quarters marched straight to Versailles, the Prince, with his Staff, rode over the field of battle of the 19th, and visited the hill behind Châtillon. This was another of the lovely days which we have lately enjoyed. All

the country was bathed in sunshine, and there was more than enough of dust along the road. We passed through pleasant valleys, with châteaux and gardens thickly scattered about them, and came to ambulance waggons full of wounded men. The houses were occupied as hospitals, and many a poor fellow with bandaged head, or with his arm in a sling, came to the garden gates to salute the Prince. More than once His Highness stopped to speak to the wounded, and they seemed much pleased by the notice that was taken of them. They had done their duty well, and deserved a share of praise.

From the four cross-roads at Le Petit Bicêtre to the slope eastward of Chatenay there were frequent traces of yesterday's fight. Dead men lay here and there in the fields, hospital waggons were halted by the roadside with relief for those who still lived, and fragments of weapons were to be seen in all directions. The village of Chatenay was utterly abandoned by its inhabitants, the houses gutted, and everything smashed. On the road to Châtillon the trees were felled, the ground broken up, and evident preparation made for defence. Then we came to the unfinished outwork on the hill behind Châtillon, from whence Paris could be seen. Here was a view of the whole city—the dome of the Invalides and the towers of Notre Dame were clearly visible, and the distance was such that a long-range gun would carry into Paris. The Bavarians were busy completing the defences of the outwork, to turn them against the city at a fitting time. Even whilst we were looking, there came a shot from one of the French forts with a roar and a hissing over our heads. It was a wonder that they did not shoot oftener. They would have done so, doubtless, if the escort had come in sight, or if the Staff had advanced on horseback to the brow of the hill.

CHAPTER X.

IN the third week of September the German armies were prosecuting three sieges, any one of which would, in ordinary times, be regarded as a great operation of war. Strasburg, the centre of the defence of the French frontier of the Rhine, and one of the strongest fortified cities in Europe, was besieged by a corps of about 60,000 men, composed of one division of Badish, one of Prussian, and one of Prussian Guard Landwehr troops, with pioneers and garrison artillery from the South German States. Metz, the centre of the defence of France between the Meuse and the Rhine, the strongest fortress in all France, surrounded by forts forming an entrenched camp, and held not only by its own garrison, but by the army under Marshal Bazaine,

was invested by seven Prussian Army Corps and three divisions of cavalry—a force whose strength probably was never less than 180,000, nor more than 210,000. Above all, Paris, defended by more than half a million of armed and disciplined men, was shut in by the Third German Army, under the Crown Prince of Prussia, and the Fourth, now called the Army of the Meuse, under the Crown Prince of Saxony, numbering, it is believed, more than 200,000 men. Besides these, Toul was attacked by a Prussian division under the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The war had become, for a time, one of sieges. Just before the investment of Paris, an attempt had been made by the Government of National Defence to ascertain whether the Germans would treat for peace on the basis of an indemnity for the expenses and losses of the war, to be paid by France. For that purpose M. Jules Favre proceeded to the King of Prussia's head-quarters, and was conferring with Count Bismarck while the Bavarians and General Vinoy's Corps were disputing for the heights of Châtillon, above Paris, on the south—positions the importance of which the French do not appear to have perceived until they had lost them. Count Bismarck had informed M. Jules Favre, by letter, that he should be "exceedingly happy to see him," and sent Prince Biron to conduct him through the Prussian lines. The interview that ensued had no result, except to embitter the feeling between the two belligerents. M. Jules Favre represented that France longed for peace, but was inflexibly resolved to accept no terms which would make a peace only a short and unquiet truce. Count Bismarck declared that if he thought such a peace was possible, he would sign it instantly. But he said France had desired this war, and she would demand another to reverse the disasters of Sedan. From Louis XIV. to Napoleon III. it had always been the policy of France to attack Germany, and rob it of territory, and this its inveterate character would survive under all changes of rulers and forms of government. It was therefore necessary, in order to secure Germany against attack, that she should keep a part of the territory which had been taken from France. He subsequently explained that the new German frontier must include the departments of the Lower and the Upper Rhine, and a portion of that of the Moselle, including Metz and Château Salins. M. Jules Favre urged that Europe would not sanction pretensions so exorbitant, and that it would be impossible to make the people of Alsace and Lorraine Germans against their will. This discussion, however, was waived in order to ascertain if terms could be arranged for an armistice, that would admit of the election of a National Assembly, into whose hands the new Government of France might resign its powers. Count Bismarck at first objected strenuously to any armistice, but subsequently expressed himself

ready to consent to one on condition that the fortresses of Strasburg, Toul, and Phalsburg should be placed in the hands of the Germans. When M. Jules Favre observed that the Assembly should meet at Paris, Count Bismarck added, that in that case one of the forts of Paris, naming Mont Valérien, must be delivered to the Prussians. Subsequently it was agreed that the Assembly might meet at Tours, by which means the difficulty about Mont Valérien would be avoided. It appeared, however, that Count Bismarck required not only possession of Strasburg, but that the garrison should surrender as prisoners of war. This demand put an end to the conference, and the French negotiator, after making some observations dictated by ardent patriotism, withdrew. France was soon after informed that Prussia would be satisfied with nothing less than her reduction to the rank of a second-rate Power, and that resistance to the death had become the duty of every Frenchman. Two of the fortresses named by Count Bismarck were destined to fall immediately. While M. Jules Favre and Count Bismarck were conferring at Ferrières, General Uhrich and a council of war were deliberating as to the surrender of Strasburg, and the capitulation of the fortress was concluded on the 28th of September, when 451 officers and 17,000 men, including the National Guard, laid down their arms. The Mobiles and local National Guards, being Alsatians, were dismissed to their homes, to the number of 12,000, while the regular troops were sent to Germany as prisoners of war. The siege had lasted about six weeks. Between the 11th and 17th of August, the place was invested by the Baden Division. On the 14th of August Lieutenant-General von Werder assumed the command of the siege corps, and Lieutenant-General von Decker and Major-General von Mertens were appointed commanders respectively of the artillery and the engineers. After the arrival of a reinforcement of two Prussian divisions, the fortress was closely surrounded. On the 21st of August an attempt was made to hasten the surrender of the place by bombardment, but it was not kept up, and on the 27th it was discontinued. In the night of the 29th of August the first parallel was opened against the north-western front, at a distance varying from 600 to 800 paces from the walls. In the night of the 31st of August the approaches to the second parallel were dug, and in the ensuing night the second parallel itself, distant from 300 to 400 paces from the fortress. Those same nights every effort was made to construct the siege batteries, which were finished with the utmost rapidity. Up to the 9th of September ninety-eight rifled guns and forty mortars were placed in position against the attacked front, which almost entirely silenced the enemy's artillery. Besides these a detachment of Baden artillery fired from Kehl, from thirty-two rifled pieces and

eight mortars, on the citadel, which it was thought might be used as a last refuge by the enemy, after the reduction of the town. In the nights between the 9th and 11th of September the approaches to the third parallel were laid. In the night of the 11th the greater part of the third parallel was made, and in a very few days the defences were laid in ruins. On the 29th of September a Special Correspondent wrote from Strasburg:—

That Strasburg has passed into the possession of the Germans through the medium of capitulation must have appeared a matter of course to all who have followed the reports describing the progress of the siege. In my last letter I reiterated the conviction that Governor Urich would at the last moment resign himself to the inevitable, and accept the fate which it was not in his power to avert. I said this after having been informed of the intention of the Commander of the German forces to endeavour to storm Strasburg on the very night that I forwarded my last letter. The anticipated result has been attained. Strasburg has ceased to be French. The grand old cathedral, which a German architect planned, will be completed at no distant day by German workmen, intent upon adding another glory to the Fatherland while accomplishing the plans of a German architect. What I did not and could not well know when I penned the words to which I have referred was the exact position which Governor Urich held with regard to the city over which he was the military ruler. It was supposed that he had entirely disregarded the feelings and desire of the inhabitants, and had prolonged a resistance which they were desirous to terminate. On the authority of a member of the Council of Defence, to whom the whole truth was well known, I can now state, without fear of contradiction, that Governor Urich was always in perfect accord with the inhabitants, and that if, in their opinion, he erred at all, it was in capitulating prematurely. Shortly after the siege began in earnest he received a deputation from the council formed for the defence of the city. Opinions were freely and frankly interchanged between the Governor on the one hand and the council on the other. The former admitted the difficulty of making a successful defence. The latter enlarged on the dangers of prolonging a hopeless resistance. The result was that a common understanding was arrived at. It was unanimously resolved by the council to strain every nerve to prevent the city from falling into the hands of the besiegers. General Urich, on his part, pledged himself to avert the calamity of exposing the city to the horrors and the consequences of an assault. As a soldier who had determined to do his duty, the General reserved to

himself the sole right to determine when the critical moment had arrived. He would neither treat nor consent to listen to any proposition to surrender until it had become actually impossible to continue the defence. Many persons thought that the decisive moment had arrived long before Governor Uhrich had become either weary or disheartened. When the fortress was no longer tenable, and when two breaches of a formidable kind had been made, the Governor determined to fulfil his pledge, and in conformity therewith the white flag, which, as I write, flies from the topmost gallery of the cathedral, was hoisted. Strange to say, though the inhabitants had suffered severely, and were reduced to great straits, the resolve of Governor Uhrich not only took the majority by surprise, but upset certain schemes of the most reprehensible character, to which the majority hoped to give effect before a German soldier entered Strasburg as a victor.

No sooner had I obtained trustworthy intelligence of what had occurred, and had transmitted the leading particulars to England, than I started for the city of which I have so long watched the fate with special interest. With facilities altogether exceptional, owing to the special kindness of a German officer, who, like myself, was bound for Strasburg, I travelled thither as rapidly as possible. Passing through Schiltigheim, I saw tokens in every quarter of the severity of the fire from the fortifications. Hardly a house was untouched. A large number had been burned to the ground, and many were converted into piles of ruins by the explosion of shells. The direct road to Strasburg was crossed by the parallels, and it was necessary to walk along the first parallel for nearly a mile before coming to the pathway along which access to the city was alone possible.

The destruction at the Austerlitz railway station, lying outside the city, was thorough. Shortly after the siege began this station was captured by the besiegers. Near this place more than one severe fight occurred when the garrison made a sortie. The fire from one of the mortar batteries was concentrated upon this station, and the numerous carriages which once stood on the line had been converted into heaps of charred wood and twisted iron. On approaching the Porte Saverne, I saw countless marks indicating the severity of the fire which the besiegers had directed towards this spot. Between this and the Porte des Pierres the walls had been breached in two places. After I had passed through the gate, the spectacle of destruction which I witnessed was one I shall not soon forget. On the right, as far as I could see, the whole quarter was a pile of rubbish. There were few marks of fire. Cannon shot and shells had reduced house after house to its original elements.

When the space between Temple Bar and Carey Street, on which the new Law Courts are to be erected, was being cleared of houses, the appearance presented was not dissimilar; with this difference, that in the case of the houses removed from that site there were signs of regularity in the midst of the destruction, whereas in Strasburg the ruined houses were literally piles of rubbish, and unless I had known that houses had once covered the spot, I should not have supposed that the rubbish had ever taken the form of shapely dwellings. In front of nearly every shop window were sloping planks, arranged with a view to ward off the falling shot. All the openings made to admit air and light into the cellars were covered over with a mass of earth and straw. In some cases the straw had evidently been taken from the most offensive, though not the least useful, part of the farmyard. The deprivation of light and air, and the presence of noisome smells, which those who occupied the cellars must have had to endure, must have been not only a severe trial, but also most detrimental to health. One house standing at a corner was propped up lest it should topple over. A cannon ball had swept a large piece out of the corner, and had cut through one of the beams which supported the two upper floors. On reaching the Place Kleber, one of the largest and finest open spaces in Strasburg, the signs of destruction were most striking. The handsome building which filled the north-eastern side of the square, and in which was a valuable museum of ancient and modern works of art, is now represented by empty walls. Nearly every house has been pierced with shot or shell. The hotel in which I write this, the well-known Maison Rouge, has been struck more than once. Being one of the first civilians who arrived here, I succeeded in getting one of the few rooms of which the German officers had not taken possession. Wishing to breakfast, I called for the bill of fare. It was as long and elaborate as usual. I came to the conclusion, that although the city had been severely injured by the bombardment, yet that the inhabitants had been able to procure not only the necessaries, but also the luxuries of life. But I was soon undeceived. The bill of fare was a relic of pre-siege days. I could get beef or ham, or *pâté de foie gras*. Towards the end of the siege, when provisions became very scarce, *pâté de foie gras* was one of the most common articles of food. Large stores of it, intended for exportation, had accumulated. Coffee and wine could be had in abundance, but milk was unprocurable, and butter could not be purchased under five francs the pound. I had not been many hours in Strasburg before a change took place in all these respects. Carts laden with vegetables entered the city. Butter was again placed on the

table. It was announced that milk would be obtainable on the morrow.

I lost no time in visiting all the points of interest, and the Cathedral among the first. To all external appearance it is uninjured. The spire is as attractive a spectacle as ever, but it has been struck in more places than one. The cross on its summit appears to have been touched by a projectile. It leans to one side. Some of the ornamental work has been carried away, and in one of the side towers a portion of the stone stair has been destroyed. The outer roof of the nave has been burned; the windows have here and there been pierced with balls, but the famous clock has escaped destruction, and the Cathedral is on the whole in excellent condition. To this place the German soldiers hastened as soon as they got here, ascending the tower and exploring the interior. The officers were as eager as the men, not only to see the renowned Cathedral, but also to learn the truth as to the damage done to it. All with whom I conversed expressed their satisfaction at the comparative unimportance of the injury inflicted. They would have lamented the destruction of the Cathedral quite as sincerely as the Strasburgers themselves. It is the belief of the latter that the destruction of the Cathedral was one of the designs of the besiegers. More than one German artillery officer assured me that orders were daily given not only to spare the city, but also carefully to avoid firing in such a way as would either damage or endanger the Cathedral. Other public buildings, however, have not escaped. The prefecture, the theatre, and the church whereof the world-renowned library formed a part, are now represented by bare walls. I have described the appearance of the quarter which I saw when I entered the city, but this is not a more lamentable spectacle than that presented by the quarter adjoining the *Porte des Pierres*. Indeed, a striking demonstration of what can be effected, when full scope is given to human industry, in the way of destruction, is obtainable by any one who visits Strasburg at this moment. The spectacle is the saddest I have ever beheld. I have no desire ever again to be present at a siege, or to be an eye-witness of its results.

A German who was in Hamburg at the time of the great fire assures me that the spectacle of desolation on the morrow of the conflagration was less heartrending than that presented by the ruined quarters of Strasburg. From the *Porte des Pierres* to the *Porte Nationale*, a distance of half a mile, hardly a single wall is standing of the hundreds of houses which formerly covered this space. Here and there a single house was still erect. I entered one of them. Shells had passed through the walls or had fallen through the roof. Some had exploded as

they entered, and had converted the interior into a wreck. Fragments of curtains, of broken glass and crockery, of bedding, books, and furniture were curiously intermingled with bricks, plaster, and wood. In one corner a few newspapers had escaped destruction. They had probably been lying on the table when the projectile which had done the damage entered the house and exploded. The last was dated the 8th of September. An old Dutch clock remained against the half-ruined wall. The hands pointed to a quarter to nine. As the clock had evidently been injured by falling stones and plaster, this probably indicates the hour at which the occurrence took place. The fire from the besieging batteries being always most severe at night, and very trifling in the morning, it is probable that this particular house was rendered uninhabitable at a quarter to nine on the night of September the 8th. The upper rooms had been filled with a collection of stuffed birds and preserved insects. A ball, or a fragment of a shell, had passed through a case of butterflies, and had destroyed some without injuring the pins with which they were pierced. The birds were lying about in shapeless heaps. Here lay a quantity of feathers, there a number of beaks and legs. Several were untouched. The proprietor of the house said that the collection belonged to a lodger, who had spent upwards of fifteen years in making it. The proprietor of the house took his own misfortune very philosophically. He fully expected to be reimbursed for the loss he had sustained. So long as he was paid, it mattered not to him whether Strasburg remained in the hands of the Germans or passed again into the hands of the French. Others to whom I talked indulged in a different strain. While lamenting the injuries inflicted, they were confident that the end had not arrived. They looked forward to a second bombardment. They were convinced that the French would soon drive out the Germans and recapture the city. For this belief they could assign no other reason than that France had done great things in 1793, and would repeat her former achievements. This is an opinion which seems to be accepted by all Frenchmen as if it were an article of faith. But I have observed that those who talk the most about 1793 do not show any alacrity in sacrificing themselves now, although the emergency is as great as it then was. Where the heroes of 1870 are to be discovered I know not. It is also noteworthy that those who are ready to foretell what France will yet perform, are not less ready to admit that the French army was composed of bad materials as well as commanded by incapable officers. Prior to the battle of Weissenburg, the regiments which encamped near Strasburg manifested an utter want of discipline.

The soldiers plundered the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, they begged for money in the streets of Strasburg, and they threatened to take by force that which was refused them.

When I made a round of the walls, I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of the artillery officer who commanded the battery which effected the breach. He was curious to witness the results of his own handiwork. The one breach is in bastion numbered 11; the other in bastion 12. Both these points face the lunettes which were captured a week ago. The breach in the bastion 12 was chiefly made by vertical fire. The other was the result of direct fire. The breach in bastion 11 was the more important of the two. It was about 200 feet wide at the top. Another twenty-four hours of heavy firing would have completed all that the besiegers intended to do before delivering the assault. Indeed everything was ready. The materials wherewith to bridge the moat were collected at Bischeim. The soldiers had been ordered to hold themselves ready to move forward at a moment's notice. That the place would have been captured is certain; but that the loss of life would have been great is certain also. It is fortunate that the end has been less bloody than was anticipated. Governor Uhrich and the garrison have distinguished themselves by the bravery of their defence, and that the Germans have shown how skilfully they can lay siege to a powerful fortress, no one can dispute. One thing, however, the Germans failed to accomplish. They could not succeed in turning their balloons to account. The attempt to survey the interior of the fortress, and to throw explosive projectiles into the magazines, had to be abandoned. The wind blew too strongly and in the wrong direction. Unless the air be perfectly still, a balloon is an instrument of little value for the purposes of war. Such is the conclusion at which the Germans have arrived. It remains to be seen whether the Parisians will find that they can derive more profit from the employment of balloons.

Your readers are aware that the Republican Government appointed M. Valentin, who represented Strasburg in 1848, Prefect of the Department of the Lower Rhine, and desired him to manifest his patriotism by obtaining admission to Strasburg with the least possible delay. He obeyed his instructions, and entered Strasburg by an indirect and difficult road. Disguised as a peasant, and availing himself of his acquaintance with the German tongue, he made friends with Prussian soldiers quartered in Bischeim. From them he obtained full particulars regarding the position and character of the works erected between that village and the city. He remarked that at one o'clock the fire of the besiegers was weakest, and the vigilance of their sentries

most relaxed. Even a siege had to be suspended while the soldiers dined. Passing through the Prussian lines between one and two o'clock on the 22nd of September, he arrived in safety at the moat. Leaping into it, he swam across. The French soldiers fired at him repeatedly, but their bullets always missed their mark. He called out to them to permit him to land, and to arrest him on landing. Their reply took the form of jeers, supplemented by bullets. At last he reached a spot near one of the gates, where he was sheltered from the fire directed from the walls. Again and again he begged the soldiers to take him prisoner, and carry him before Governor Uhrich. Finally they consented. When brought before the governor, he turned up the sleeve of his shirt, and took therefrom the official document containing his appointment as Prefect. His title to the post was at once recognized, and on the evening of the same day he issued a proclamation wherein his assumption of his post was announced, and the Republic formally proclaimed. He was little more than a week in office.

With one deplorable exception, the inhabitants of Strasburg have treated their conquerors with great consideration. Yesterday three soldiers were shot in a by-street near the Cathedral. The assassins fled. One of them was pursued by some citizens who witnessed the deed. He took refuge in the Café de Commerce. There he was detained till the German soldiers arrived. The citizens who were present specially called their attention to the fact that not only did they repudiate all complicity with the murderers, but that they had done their utmost to hinder their escape. As soon as General Werder heard the tidings he ordered the city to pay a heavy contribution, and he threatened to treat the inhabitants with the greatest rigour, and to humiliate them by making a triumphal entry into their city with his whole army. However, when the Mayor represented that the blame could not fairly be placed on the inhabitants, and when he was convinced that the act was entirely the work of isolated ruffians, he cancelled the orders he had given, and relieved the city from paying the enormous contribution of four millions of francs.

October 2.—I had supposed that bastion No. 11 had suffered the most, seeing that a breach was made there, and that the interior had been rendered entirely untenable. Yet the Citadel was even in a worse state than this bastion. Where a gate stood on the side facing Kehl was now a rude pile of stones, the materials composing the gate and the adjoining wall having fallen forward, and formed an artificial pathway over the moat. With the exception of some minor gateways, no place was habitable within the vast area covered by the Citadel. The sup-

position was, that after the city was occupied the Citadel might be held. The truth is, that the former proved the stronger, and the latter much more easily destroyed than had been anticipated. This is partly due to the accuracy and severity of the double fire to which the Citadel was subjected. While the batteries at Kehl kept up an incessant fire on the one side, those near Schiltigheim threw bombs into it on the other. Many shells were thrown into it from the giant mortars. That the fire from the Citadel should latterly have been very weak seems perfectly natural to those who have beheld its present condition. That it held out so long is more surprising than that it surrendered when it did. Perhaps it may interest some persons to learn that in General Werder's opinion the siege works constructed by the Würtembergers were patterns of military engineering. A foreign officer of engineers, with whom I walked over the works, said that he had never seen trenches or parallels more skilfully planned, or more efficiently finished. If our Government thought that English military engineers had anything to learn, they would doubtless have sent one to watch the siege, and to report as to the works. It is possible that such an officer was present. If so, his presence was kept a secret. An English officer of marines was said to have been there during the later stage of the bombardment. Neither professional men nor sightseers will long have an opportunity of inspecting these works, for they are being cleared away with great speed.

It is possible that General Werder will be blamed for the way in which he conducted the siege, and may even be severely censured, not only for making a large portion of Strasburg an unsightly pile of ruins, but also for inflicting much suffering upon defenceless inhabitants. In anticipation of these charges, I may state what I know from direct personal knowledge to be the view held by the General himself. His own desire was to do nothing that would protract or embitter the war. He was anxious to act in the way most conducive to the re-establishment of peace. The bombardment which Strasburg underwent in the first instance, was simply designed with a view to demonstrate to the citizens that the risk of refusing to capitulate at once was alike serious and palpable. Nor was the damage done by this bombardment so great as has been alleged. It fell upon the public authorities far more heavily than upon the inhabitants. Private houses suffered but trifling injuries. Unfortunately, one of the first buildings to be struck and set on fire by a shell was the new Protestant Church. The building forming a part of this church was that in which the famous library was contained. Again, it must be noted that the blame

for this piece of vandalism rests upon Governor Uhrich rather than upon General Werder. As I have mentioned in previous letters, the latter gave twenty-four hours' notice of his intention to bombard the city; but the former omitted to communicate the intelligence to the inhabitants. Nor was the bombardment protracted. No sooner was it perceived that the garrison had determined to hold out, than the siege was conducted with direct reference to the destruction of the fortifications. But these have been so constructed as to render it impossible to direct a fire against them, which should not at the same time destroy the dwellings immediately behind them. Indeed, the conclusion to be drawn from the fate of Strasburg is, that a large city should never be fortified. The inhabitants of Strasburg say that if the Germans would raze the fortifications, and make their city an open one, they would hail annexation to Germany with enthusiasm, and would never regret their severance from France.

Since I entered Strasburg in the rear of the German troops three days have elapsed. It is with difficulty I can realize the fact that I am still in the same city. The whole place wears a new aspect. The more prominent marks of the siege are no longer to be seen in the streets. The huge piles of earth and straw which protected the inlets to the cellars have been removed from before nearly every house. The piles of wooden planks erected to protect the shop fronts have disappeared, the shutters have been removed from the windows, and business has been resumed. So great has been the change, that few persons who enter the city now would suppose how dismal was its appearance but a short time ago. The energy which the German authorities have displayed has excited the wonder of the citizens. They contrast it with the manner in which the French used to do their work, and they are every day becoming more reconciled to the prospect of being reunited to a nation which, alike during peace and during war, has at present no superior in the world.

CHAPTER XI.

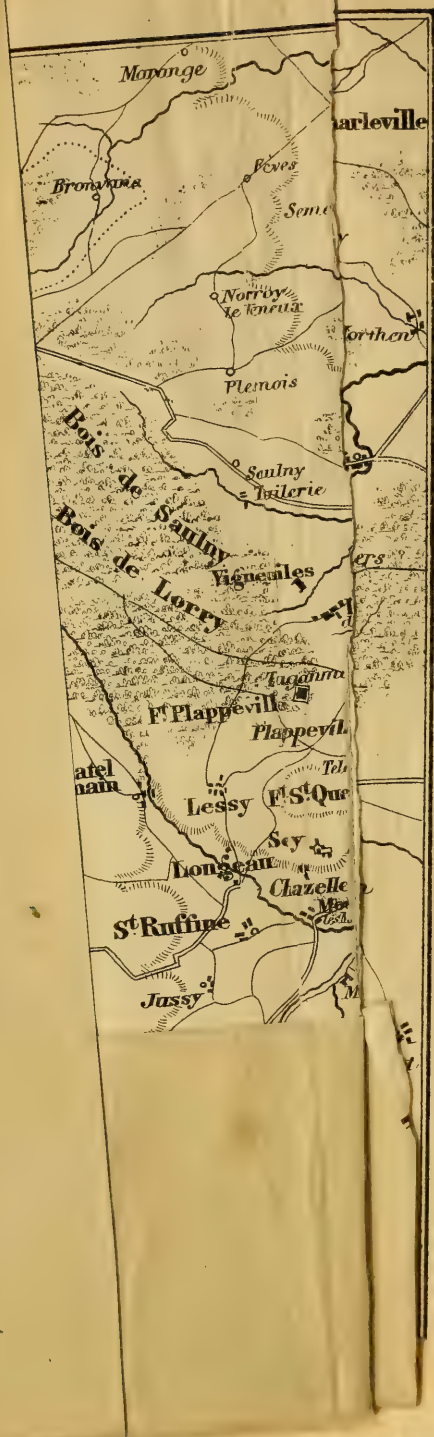
It was on the 22nd of August, four days after the battle of Gravelotte, that the Germans began to construct the system of works which very soon enabled them to constitute Marshal Bazaine and his army their prisoners. Every road leading to the fortress was strongly occupied, and every available position entrenched and armed. Day by day the German fortifications grew around the

Marshal, and when he made his grand sortie on the 31st, he found that he was hemmed in without hope of escape. In some way which has never been explained, Bazaine was made aware that MacMahon was advancing with the intention of attacking the besiegers, and the 31st of August appears to have been agreed on between them as the day on which Bazaine should attack the Germans from Metz, while MacMahon's Army of the North should operate in their rear. We know, from the Emperor Napoleon's conversation with the King of Prussia at Sedan, that at MacMahon's head-quarters it was assumed, without doubt or hesitation, that if that Marshal's forces were to be opposed, the forces necessary for that purpose must be withdrawn from the siege of Metz. The French paid dearly for this error. The strenuous efforts of Bazaine on the 31st of August utterly failed before the steadfastness of the German battalions and the strength of their batteries, and the French were defeated with heavy loss: but the fortress held out for seven weeks longer. The Special Correspondent attached to the German army, who made a point of always being with the advanced posts, wrote on the 29th of September from Flanville, a village on the east of Metz, giving an account of the lines of investment:—

Being anxious to visit the last of the great French strongholds which still holds out against German assault, I proceeded from Brussels to Luxemburg, having the intention, if it were possible, of penetrating to the Prussian army lying around Metz, by the direct southern route, making a circuit to avoid Thionville. I found the railway from Brussels as far as Neufchateau thronged, as is its wont, with Johanniters and other varieties of the great red-cross species, as well as with numerous English tourists, bound for a gape at the battle-field of Sedan. The nondescripts thinned off as we approached Arlon, and there were left only a few honest gentlemen who were outward-bound with medical stores and comforts for the sick and wounded. Arlon, from its position, has been selected as a large central dépôt for these contributions from the sympathy of the world. Luxemburg, I had taken for granted, would be as full as Brussels, Bouillon, and other neutral towns which I had visited; it was therefore quite a pleasant surprise to find commissionaires actually touting for custom for the various hotels. In the hostelry which I selected I found traces of not a few journalists who had gone forth nominally on the war-path, but who had preferred the security, the good living, and the clean beds of the Hôtel de Cologne to the risks and discomforts of the front. After a run in the morning round the now dismantled fortifications, I took train for Saarbruck. The pleasant

frontier town has recovered fast from the succession of sensations, consisting of the battles of Saarbruck and Speichern, then of the huge masses of wounded from Gravelotte, and lastly of the thousands of French prisoners on the way to captivity in Germany, and the townspeople have lapsed into their ordinary semi-somnolent condition—not even enlivened by the presence as yet of the throng of sight-seers who are sure to crowd to the vicinity as soon as the route is considered quite safe.

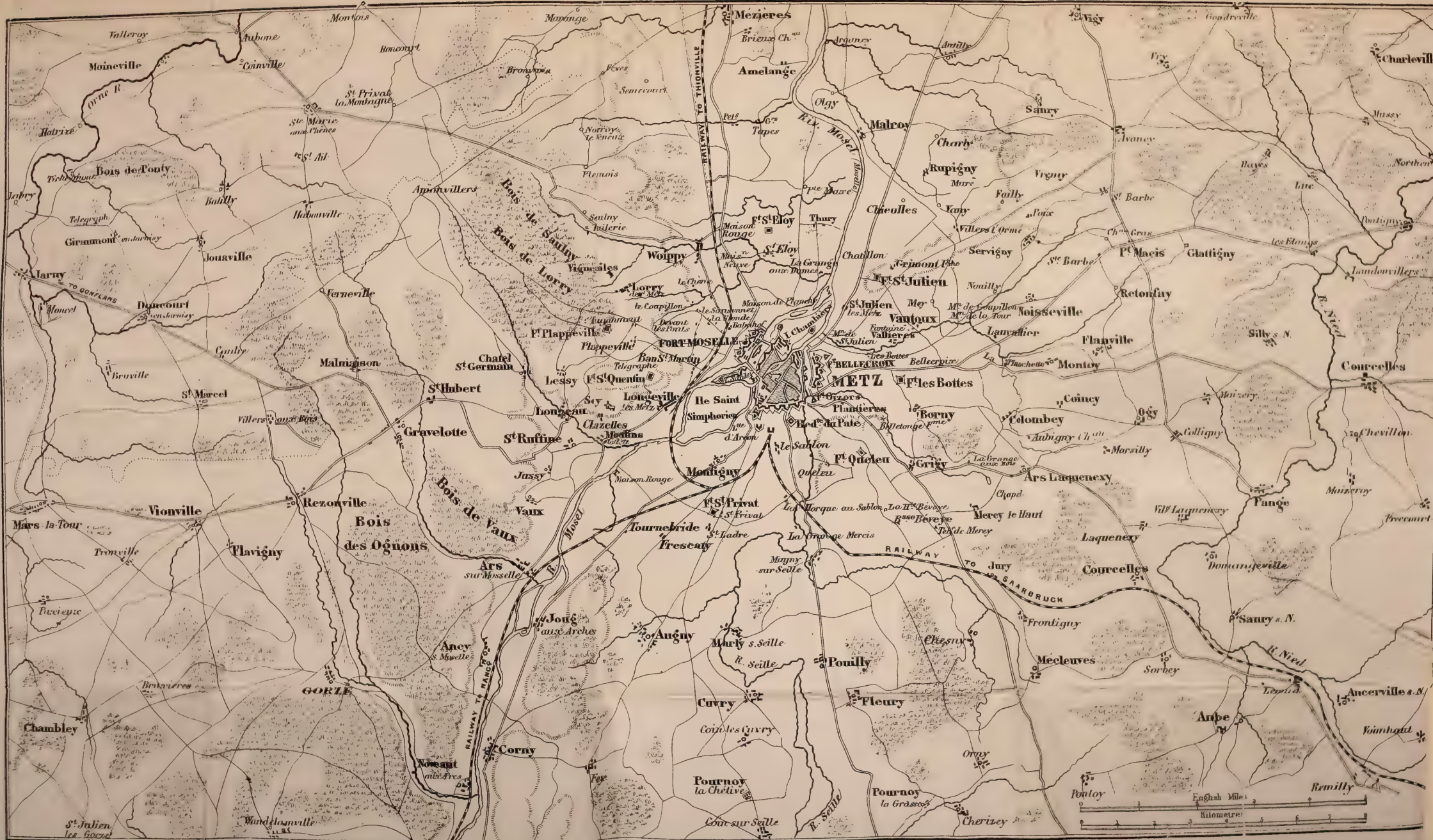
It was with some surprise that I learned that the railway was in full working order and open for all and sundry passengers, civilian as well as military, as far as Courcelles, nine miles from Metz. I knew that it was open, but I had imagined that it was only traversed by my old friend the *militär-zug*. The cargo of the train that left Saarbruck this morning at seven was of a sufficiently diversified character. There were country women, with great tubs of butter, which they were taking up to the front to find a good market; officers and soldiers, new men and convalescents, both from sickness and wounds, on their way to join and rejoin their regiments; Saarbruck merchants going up for orders; a few Englishmen who nourished the idea that the fighting was chronically in progress just outside the station at Courcelles, and that by walking a few paces they would be able to command a bird's-eye view of the whole affair; *marketenders*, who had been making investments; and a few Frenchmen on their way to the intermediate towns, who were doing their best to seem as German as possible. Our way to Forbach lay through a corner of the ground on which was fought the battle of Speichern, and as I passed through the woods of the latter, in front of Schönecken, I saw not a few graves of the men whom I had seen fall two months ago. Near St. Avold we passed the débris of the train which was shattered in the collision that brought death to several French prisoners, and at this town also we found a large dépôt of military stores and provender. There was a still larger dépôt at Falquemont, where also were collected a quantity of the artillery waggons captured from the French at Gravelotte. The station at Courcelles was a sight. It was a centre from which radiated in every direction long lines of waggons of every description, carrying stores of all kinds to the different army posts—north, south, east, and west. All around the deserted little village itself are great herds of cattle, piles of stores, whole pyramids of medical comforts, and long lines of sick and relay horses. The bustle was immense, and yet everything seemed orderly. There was of course an Etappen Commando in the station, but the worthy lieutenant who represented the said Etappen Commando knew nothing



whatever about anything. All he could or would tell me was that Prince Frederick Charles's head-quarters were at Corny, on the Moselle, to the south of Metz, but he did not know the distance. He had no waggons, no horses, very little temper, and less time to gossip. The circumstances were sufficiently unpromising. One might as well look for quatern loaves in the kennel of Fleet Street as for quarters in or around Courcelles; and the field-post, the only and that a precarious means of getting to Corny, did not leave till three in the morning. I took the resolution of pursuing a policy out of which I have so often found luck eventuate—of going straight to the front till the foreposts would let me go no farther.

To follow me in what I am about to write, the reader will find himself greatly advantaged by reference to a good map. Going northward, and inclining westward from Courcelles, I passed in succession through the villages of Laquenexy, Marsilly, Ogy, and St. Agnan. All these I found occupied by troops, constituting the second investing line environing the fortress and the town of Metz. From St. Agnan I proceeded two kilometres, still in the same direction, till I reached the village of Flanville, where I found the 4th Regiment of Infantry, forming part of the 2nd division of the 1st Army Corps. The Staff I found comfortably located in a pleasant château, and liking the looks of the place and the friendly ways of the officers, I asked permission to attach myself for the present to the regiment—a civility which was frankly and unhesitatingly granted. I have been informally taken on the strength, the good old *Oberst* makes me free of his modest table, the subalterns, right hearty fellows all, have assigned me six feet by four of straw in the corner of the drawing-room, in which there is not a scrap of furniture but a grand piano, on which a sequence of volunteers, sometimes accompanied by singing, sometimes by dancing, is constantly going on, and everybody is anxious to give himself trouble to show attention. My lines have fallen in pleasant places—add to which, that I am exactly on the spot against the front of which the French choose to direct the afternoon attacks which they are so fond of making. Here therefore I intend to remain—at all events for a few days—making excursions daily to the right or left. The Major of the 4th has placed at my disposal his second charger. This excellent quadruped I used for a short circuit this afternoon, in company with the Hauptmann of the 6th Company, and I will now quit the first person singular, of which the reader must be heartily tired, to explain what I have learned and what I have seen.

From the Moselle, on the east side, the 7th Army Corps hold



the line of environment, lying in the villages of Magny, Peltry, and Mercy-le-Haut, which last, by the way, is partly burnt, on so far as Ars Laquenexy. Their foreposts and field-guards are a little farther forward, but not so far as they were a few days ago, when the foreposts were at La Grange aux Bois. The left of the 1st Army Corps lies in Colombey, which is also considerably burnt, feeling the right of the 7th in Mercy-le-Haut. Its second line extends to the northward in the villages of Ogy, Flanville, Retonfay, Château Gras, and Ste. Barbe. The first line lies in Coincy, Montoy, Noisseville, Servigny, and Faily. The whole of this latter line is within range of the great guns of the great Metz outwork of St. Julien, which occupies the summit of a mamelon. Between the first and second line there is only an interval of about a mile. To the front there lie, first the foreposts, then the *feldwachen* (field watches), and lastly the single sentries, within 1,800 yards of Fort St. Julien. The first line occupies a continuous entrenchment, the continuation of which runs right round Metz. All the villages are roughly fortified by barricades, *chevaux-de-frise*, &c.; holes are broken through all the houses for firing, and, indeed, every village forms a very respectable, if rough and ready, *festung*. The foreposts lie either in single houses, also well fortified by entrenchments and barricades, or in the field behind earthworks of no inconsiderable magnitude. The *feldwachen* chiefly occupy woods or the gardens of châteaux. A *feldwache* which may be taken as typical is at Lauvallier, an isolated village on the great route, two kilometres from Montoy nearer Metz. Here lie two companies, arms in hand, and ready for a sortie from the enemy at any moment. To the left, at the hamlet of La Planchette, is another *feldwache* in a deep ravine. Here I had to dismount and grope up the slope beyond to the knoll on which the solitary sentry kept his watch within easy shot of a Chassepôt from the French before Fort St. Julien. We could see with the naked eye the Frenchmen moving about the fortress and circulating about the environs both of it and of the town, which lies to the southward of it, the great eminence of Mont St. Quentin, with its mass of fortifications on the summit, dominating the whole valley from the farther side of the Moselle. All the front which I traversed was pitted over with the craters of shells. The men of one of the regiments were erecting quite permanent barracks of wood, the sides covered with earth, a little way in the rear of the brewery behind Lauvallier. To the north, Noisseville is densely filled with Prussian troops; Nouilly, which lies between it and St. Julien, is neutral ground, occupied by neither army, while the French are in force in Mey, which is still nearer the fortress. We went forward to the edge of a

wood near Mey, accompanied by two Prussian patrol-dragoons, and got a warning to go back in the shape of a sharp fusilade from out of a garden in the environs of Mey. To complete the narrative of the localities, the environment is taken up on the right of the 1st Army Corps by the Landwehr Division, consisting of three brigades, each six battalions strong, under the command of General von Kummer. They cover the ground round nearly to the Moselle on the north; but of their dispositions I shall be able to write with greater accuracy to-morrow after a visit. The General commanding the 1st Army Corps, His Excellency von Manteuffel, lies in Ste. Barbe, a little to our north. As the senior officer commanding hereabout, he has the nominal command of all the army on this side the Moselle since the departure of General von Steinmetz, who also had his quarters in Ste. Barbe. Our immediate commander is General von Pritsoltwitz, who is over the Second Division of the 1st Army Corps, and who has his quarters two kilometres behind us, in the little village of Puche, where likewise is the post.

With the exception of the little spurt of fire which we rather wantonly drew from Mey, to-day has passed in extreme quietude, as also did yesterday, with the exception of a few outpost skirmishes. On the 28th, however, there was a fight of some considerable magnitude. The Prussian foreposts occupied in no great strength the village of Colombey, where there are three large châteaux, in the upper stories of which there had been left by its former occupiers a considerable store of grain. They have taken refuge in Metz, and probably acquainted the French of the existence of these stores. Anyhow, in the afternoon of the 28th, the French, in large numbers, and covered by the artillery of St. Julien, made a dash at Colombey, their advance followed by a number of empty waggons. For once they surprised the comparatively weak Prussian foreposts, and drove them out of Colombey. Covering their operations by throwing forward tirailleurs into the woods to the front and towards La Planchette, they filled the waggons with the grain and started them on the return journey. But, meanwhile, the Prussian artillery had come to the front, and the shells fell thick among the Frenchmen in Colombey and the convoy on the road. The former scuttled back in great haste under the guns of St. Julien; the waggons went on at a gallop, but out of thirty-six only fourteen succeeded in getting safe off. The rest were arrested *in transitu* by the influence which the Prussian shells exercised on the animals which drew the waggons—an influence which manifested itself in limbs blown in a variety of directions. There was no great loss in killed or wounded on either side. A captain of the 44th was killed under circum-

stances which are a disgrace to civilized warfare. When his detachment was in retreat he fell wounded severely, but not mortally. His men placed him in shelter, and then left him as they fell back. When they recovered the village they found the corpse of their captain, mangled barbarously—his fingers cut off for the sake of the rings he wore, and his throat cut from ear to ear. The Prussians are justly incensed at this atrocity. Deserters and the Prussian prisoners whom Bazaine has sent back, concur in representing the condition of the troops inside and around Metz as being very bad in the matter of food. They are living chiefly on horseflesh, and have neither flour, rice, nor salt—the latter want being the subject of much complaint. The discipline of the troops is represented as good, and the *morale* of a character very different to that of the disorganized horde I saw throw down their arms at Sedan. But the Prussian returned prisoners unite in abusing the domineering greed of the French officers, who care nothing, comparatively, for their men, provided their own wants are satisfied. This selfishness seems forcibly to have struck the honest Prussians, who are used to very different treatment.

Between the foreposts of the two armies a tolerably genial feeling prevailed till the action of the 28th, which I have referred to. My friends here tell me that a Prussian mounted patrol the other day left a note under a stone addressed to the French officer in command of the foreposts, asking whether he could accommodate the Prussian forepost officer with a bottle of champagne. At the next round the bottle of champagne was duly found, along with a request for a little knot of salt, which, of course, was complied with. The alertness and completeness of the Prussian forepost system is a great feature of the army, and one of the leading causes of its success. At night the *feldwache* goes forward to the post occupied during the day by the farthest outlying sentry. Here it breaks right and left into small pickets, leaving a strong nucleus in the centre. The front, at a distance of two or three hundred yards, is continually traversed by cavalry patrols, who often ride right in among the sleeping Frenchmen, whose system of night vigilance is not at all what it should be. Then there is a pistol shot and a round of bootless Chassepôt-firing in the dark—the daring Uhlan dashes out through the red legs, back to his supports. Talking of Chassepôts, I may mention that the Prussian forepost troops are now extensively armed with these weapons, to enable them to cope on equal terms with the French tirailleurs. Of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment seventy-five men are so armed, or rather seventy-five Chassepôts are in use and are transferred from *feldwache* to *felwache*, as the changes of guard are made.

One whole regiment (the 35th) is armed with the Chassepôt. This settles the question as to the relative merits in the eyes of the Prussians of the Chassepôt and the needle-gun. Immediately after the war, I doubt not there will be a general conversion—the operation will not be difficult.

All this district is dotted over with the graves of the battle fought by Steinmetz on the 14th of August, and of men who have fallen in the various forepost fights. All the way to Courcelles it is a scene of utter barrenness and desolation, traversed everywhere by tracks of waggons, chequered by abandoned bivouacs, the leafy bowers of which, plastered with mud, stand forlorn and unused, all the troops being now under cover except the foreposts, who must necessarily remain in the open. They never sleep—their vigilance extends right round the clock for the four-and-twenty hours. Very few of the inhabitants still remain in the district, and of these the plight is very miserable. The Prussians keep them alive by serving out victuals to them, otherwise they would starve. Agricultural occupations are at a standstill; the vineyards, traversed by waggon roads and cut in two by entrenchments, are utterly ruined. The houses are wrecks, many of them wholly or partially burned by the fires kindled by the shells. In Courcelles, the only living thing not Prussian is a mongrel which stuck to his kennel when his owner ran away. The Prussians have christened him “Courcelles,” and the time-serving rogue is already more than half Prussian—traitor that he is. I found a considerable number of inhabitants in the forepost village of Montoy; an old woman sat placidly before the door knitting stockings, while the troops lined the entrenchment just in her front. I suppose she had got so used to shells and bullets that she did not mind them, or it might be that her despair had culminated in a sort of apathy of equanimity. For the poor folks around here something must be done by the philanthropists of the world, or they will inevitably starve the moment that the Prussians withdraw. Even if they had horses, and if the bullets were not sweeping their farms, yet this year they durst not put a spade into the ground. Every field holds the “sacred and precious seed” that will germinate never till the last trumpet sounds. No more Christian act could be done by those who care not for nationality when misery and want threaten their fellow-men, than to contribute to their relief.

September 30th, Morning.—Yesterday evening it was officially made known to the troops that the French were constructing three bridges across the Moselle to the westward of Fort St. Julien, it was believed with a view to a sortie in the direction of Maison Rouge and Woippy. About four o'clock this morning

the sky became brilliantly illuminated with the shells under the fire of which they attempted to carry out their design, and with the return fire with which the Prussian artillery met it. In the thick darkness the effect, as seen from this point (about four miles away), was magnificent. Between the louder crashes of the cannon was heard the sharper rattle of the musketry fire, singly and in volleys. The firing became fainter towards six o'clock, and by seven had died away altogether—the presumption being that the French attempt had been baulked, and this I have since learned was the case. A few days ago the garrison of Thionville surprised and captured a Prussian provision train, which was carried into that fortress. The food is more needed in Metz than in Thionville, and it was anticipated that an effort would be made to fight the train through the Prussian environment into the beleaguered fortress. In all probability the affair of this morning has been a diversion intended to facilitate this movement. The Prussians, however, were fully alive to the contingency, and they have succeeded in foiling the attempt.

Flanville, before Metz, September 30th.—I this morning sent you a brief telegram concerning an engagement which took place early this morning to the north of St. Julien. As it is impossible to transmit private telegrams from Courcelles, I had to send it down to Saarbruck, from which I trust it has been forwarded with correctness and expedition. There was also this morning a little forepost skirmish between a company of the 4th Regiment and the French outposts, about a mile to the left front of this place, between Montoy and Colombey. The Prussians took twelve French prisoners, at the expense of three of their own number slightly wounded.

The Prussian army lying around Metz have obtained, from sources which I am not at liberty to mention, complete charts and full particulars of the position of the French troops lying around Metz. Bazaine's forces—that is to say, the army driven back on Metz after the battle of Gravelotte—are not permitted to enter the town of Metz. The whole army is encamped on the slopes of the fortifications either of the town or of the outlying strongholds, in the intervening country, and in the various villages which still remain in the possession of the French. The forts are garrisoned by Mobiles and National Guards. Bazaine's head-quarters are inside the town. Opposite us here in Flanville, lies the 3rd Army Corps of the French army. Its forepost nearest us is in the wood in front of Mey, and the chain extends southward to the front of Belle Croix. The mass of the corps lies in the rear. Within the last few days a considerable camp has been established on the slope of St. Julien, looking towards us. We can see the white tents, and

the red-legged gentlemen strolling about them. Their patrols, mounted and on foot, cross our front so near that the countenances of the men can be made out with the glass. The Prussian *feldwachen* could pick them off quite easily if they chose; but there is an order against firing at small detached parties. The French do not show the same civility. A single man cannot show himself on the advance line without being blazed at by a regular volley, which seldom takes any effect, the firing being so wild. The guard changing is a great time for a waste of French powder and shot all along the line, and Belle Croix spitefully throws a few shells at the brewery on the great *chaussée*, constituting the chief forepost on our right front. Directly in front of us is Montoy and the important forepost of La Planchette, and to its left is another forepost in an isolated house on another *chaussée*, where stood a battery of Prussian artillery in the action of the day before yesterday, that did much execution among the French troops. Another battery stood at the brewery behind Lauvallier, which enfiladed them on their retreat, which was what Mrs. Malaprop would call "precipitous"

The few Prussian soldiers who casually fall into the hands of the French, are now never detained more than twenty-four hours. One of the men thus returned has informed me that the scale of rations issued to the French troops is at the rate of one loaf to every twelve men per day—about four men's bread according to the ordinary issue—and a scanty portion of horseflesh. On the other hand, rations are full and good in the Prussian lines, but extras are comparatively dear. A dozen of eggs costs about two shillings, and half a gallon of milk about eighteenpence, but besides being dear, such delicacies are very scarce. The few inhabitants left have not many fowls, and fewer cows. Their disposition, too, is the reverse of kindly to the Prussian troops, and some stringent measures have been found necessary to put a stop to shooting from behind hedges.

I do not think it is generally known in England how thorough was the understanding between Bazaine and MacMahon, and how detailed was the programme in case of the success of the movement of the latter. Intercepted letters bear testimony to the fact that MacMahon was expected to make his appearance from the Ardennes about the 30th of August. The signal for the Metz army was to be three bombs fired in the air by MacMahon, and then a sortie was to be made at the same moment that the army of Châlons was to fall on the Prussian rear. It is actually the case that Bazaine was cautioned against allowing the guns of the fortress to have too much elevation when fired in support of the sortie, to obviate the risk of the projectiles falling in the co-operating army on the farther side of the

Prussians. Had Von Moltke and the Crown Prince not succeeded in baulking the scheme, well planned as it undoubtedly was, the Prussian armies might not have been lying to-day around Paris and Metz.

Bazaine is carefully kept informed of the progress of the Prussian arms in France. Whenever any important event takes place, such as the surrender of Toul or of Strasburg, a parlementaire is sent forward with the information. The other day Bazaine sent out to Prince Frederick Charles with a request for some newspapers, and files of English, German, and French journals were promptly sent in to him. I fear he did not take much encouragement from the information which they afforded him. So grimly desirous were the Prussians that he should be fully posted up in everything that was going forward, that one of Bazaine's general officers was sedulously forwarded to the Meuse immediately after the battle of Sedan, and allowed to acquaint himself thoroughly with the untoward aspect of affairs there. Inside Metz the *Courrier de la Moselle*, it is believed, is still published. A prisoner recently returned smuggled out a copy a few days old, which contained an address from Bazaine to his army. In it he told them not to be downcast, far less to think of disaffection, for that within a few weeks he would turn the tables on the Prussians by taking the larger proportion of their guns, and great store of their provisions. In the meantime he enjoined vigilance and constant alertness, and commended to his officers the sedulous study of the writings of the Archduke Charles, of Frederick the Great, and of the History of the Thirty Years' War, to learn the science of conducting the defence of a fortress. Had the officers received a proper military education, like that imparted to every Prussian officer, there would be no need for counselling them to "read up" now, when the pinch has come.

When the French make a sortie their scheme of advance is very characteristic. They scuttle out from the shelter of the fortresses in the loosest skirmishing order, and with great rapidity till they reach intermediate spaces sheltered from the Prussian fire, whether by woods or by the configuration of the ground. In these they accumulate their masses, and come forward in dense columns. But they have never yet, save at Colombey the other day, and that by an unwonted surprise, succeeded in getting close to the Prussian first line. The artillery goes to work with its deadly practice, and there is no alternative but a rapid retreat. These demonstrations are always accompanied by a cannonade from the fortresses of Belle Croix and St. Julien, but never by the discharge of field artillery. This latter circumstance leads the Prussians to the conclusion that the French

must be short of ammunition for their field guns; and this seems probable, looking to the lavish use they made of them at Gravelotte. There must be mortars in Belle Croix of great magnitude, for I saw to-day, by Lauvallier, lying in the ditch, a huge shell, which could not have been less than a 72-pounder, that had been a compliment from that fort. It was unexploded—a fact noticeable of a large proportion of the French shells.

The battle of Courcelles, on the 14th August, fought by the Third Army, now lying around Metz, when General Steinmetz held the command of it, has hardly received the attention merited by an engagement so obstinate and bloody. It may give you some idea of what it cost to win it, if I give details of the losses suffered by some of the regiments. On the 14th August, and in the minor fights of the 30th and 31st, and also during the course of the present month, this 4th Regiment, with which I am now staying, has lost (killed and wounded) thirty-five officers out of a total of sixty, and 1,000 men out of 3,000. The 45th Regiment, also lying in this vicinity, has lost yet more of its officers. Out of sixty no fewer than forty-two have fallen. The result is that a large number of under-officers have received commissions. As these are comparatively inexperienced in their new duties, they daily receive assiduous instructions from their seniors. These informal lectures are highly interesting—not a few officers of the British service would greatly benefit by attending them. The troops are also drilled daily, notwithstanding that they are in front of the enemy. This morning I watched a whole battalion at skirmishing drill, and a right pretty sight it was. The recruits that have come forward since the beginning of the war spend hours daily in perfecting their drill, and the efficiency of the whole army is sedulously maintained at the highest pitch.

The following letter from the same Correspondent, dated Noisseville, October 2nd, and written in the first line before Metz, gives a detailed account of the fortifications by which Metz was defended, and under the shelter of which Bazaine and his army lay for more than two months:—

The town of Metz, with the great Cathedral, lies for the most part on the east side of a branch of the Moselle, which forks off from the main stream at La Grange aux Dames, and forms the islands of Chambière, and lower down of Sauley and St. Simphorien. A large suburb, however, stands on the first of these islands. The inner fortifications surround the town continuously, with the exception of one gap to the southward, which is covered efficiently by the branch of the Moselle which divides the islands of Sauley and St. Simphorien. On

the north of the Ile Chambière are two important forts on the inner line, one at the north-western angle of the *enceinte*, the other detached in the plain of the island, but connected with the *enceinte* by a covered way. On the south of the inner line are the Redoute du Pâté to the east, and the Lunette d'Arcon to the west, both connected with the *enceinte* by a covered way. The western side of the inner line is covered by the great Fort Moselle, on the farther side of the main stream of the Moselle, a double crown work of immense strength and magnitude, enclosing great magazines and arsenals. To the south of it the bastion of Ile Sauley sends out a long spur of fortifications, which crosses the Moselle, and terminates in a redoubt on the farther side. Nor is the eastern side of the inner line less strongly protected. In front of the *enceinte* looms the great double crown work of Belle Croix, Cormontaigne's masterpiece, to the full as large as Fort Moselle, and more highly favoured by its natural position. To the south of it stands Fort Gisors, a minor detached fortification which serves to complete the circuit of connection with the Redoute du Pâté on the south. Thus the town of Metz is, in fact, environed by two lines of fortifications, the continuous *enceinte* with its bastions and what I may term the outer cordon of the inner circle having intimate connection with the *enceinte*.

Of themselves these defences would make the place all but impregnable, but they are by no means the most important defences of this extraordinary fortress. There is an outer circle of detached fortifications, each of which is the complement of the other, and of which no one can be assailed without the assailant laying his account to be enfiladed by at least two of the others. Let me begin with these at the Moselle, on the north of the town at La Grange aux Dames, and work round, proceeding first in an easterly direction. After climbing the bank of the stream, we come to the *chaussée* leading to Bouzonville, and crossing it we almost immediately come on the great glacis of Fort St. Julien. This is an outlying fort of the first magnitude, covering the whole of the low summit of a natural eminence, and having on three sides a natural glacis—therefore of great extent. It lies about two English miles from Metz, in a north-easterly direction, and a little to the north-east of it is the monastery and wood of Grimont, the former of which has been scientifically diverted from ecclesiastical to military purposes. About a mile and a half due south of St. Julien, and about a mile due east from Fort Belle Croix, is Fort Les Bottes, a great hog-backed structure chiefly of earth, which has been thrown up as a precautionary

measure, either immediately before or immediately after the outbreak of the war. Its position is very important as a link between St. Julien and Fort Queleu, on the south. It stands a little to the south of the great *chaussée* from Metz to Saarlouis and Saarbruck, while as yet the bisection has not taken place. Forward about a mile from Les Bottes, and on the *chaussée* just before it divides into two, is a village named Belle Croix, which must not, however, be confounded with the fort of the same name. Here, also, there are many earthworks and guns, but the latter, for the most part, are field artillery, and paucity of ammunition keeps them tolerably quiet. About a mile and a half south of Fort Les Bottes, and about the same distance from Metz, is Fort Queleu, also an important structure, dominating the main road to Strasbourg and the adjoining flat country as far as the telegraph on the elevated ground before Mercy-le-Haut. Turning now westward, and inclining to the south, we come to Fort St. Privat, at a distance of about two and a half miles both from Les Bottes and Metz. Its value consists in the command it has of the eastern side of the valley of the Moselle, of the road from Nancy, and of the railway lines which converge behind it. Leaving it, we come to the Moselle again, this time on the south-west side of the town, and striking up due north, we have nothing in the shape of fortifications till we climb the great hump, on the top of which stands Fort St. Quentin, the greatest outwork of Metz. St. Quentin is a complete fortress in itself; it could hold out were all its neighbours taken, and it may safely be termed impregnable, looking at the combined strength of its natural position and its vast fortifications. Not only does it dominate the country to the south, south-west, west, and north-west, but it frowns outward to the east, and its great guns would play an important part in the defence against an attack on the inner fortifications of Metz. North-west of it, about a mile on the top of the bluffs, lies Fort Plappeville, or Les Carrières, the natural position of which is not so strong as that of St. Quentin, because the elevation on which it stands is not isolated, while it is open in the rear, and therefore requires St. Quentin as the complement of its defence. It, however, acts as a defence over a great tract of country to the west, and keeps a besieging force at a respectful distance, so that it cannot reach the edge of the bluffs and pitch projectiles down into Metz. Due north from Metz, about two miles, and standing in the middle of the plain, bounded by the Thionville Railway on the west, and the Moselle on the east, lies Fort St. Eloy, the last and not the least important of the out-

works of Metz. Its province is, in combination with St. Julien, to take care of the valley of the Moselle to the northward, and to dominate the great road to Thionville. All these fortifications (except the little Belle Croix) are furnished with heavy guns of position, and it is believed that there is no lack of ammunition for the use of these great fortress guns, although field-artillery ammunition may be short. Besides their field artillery, the Prussians have forty 24-pounders on the other side of the Moselle, and no more. Their position, then, is dictated at once by sound military conditions, since a blockade answers the purpose they have in view, and by a policy to which I shall refer later.

Our position here—into which we marched last night—is sufficiently far advanced to make its occupation very ticklish work. The village is within easy range of the shell-fire, either from St. Julien or Fort Les Bottes, while the field-guns at the little Belle Croix are, so to speak, just over the way. The village constitutes part of the line of the Prussian entrenchments; every cottage is a stronghold; in every street, alley, and gap is an earthwork. We are now in front of the brewery behind Lauvallier, a little behind the line of which we lay at Flanville. About three hundred yards to our right front, in the bottom of a rather abrupt valley, is the village of Nouilly, which belongs to neither side. Just outside of it, on the French side, and to the north-west, begins the Bois de Grimont, on the southern edge of which lies the village of Mey, occupied by the French. The Bois de Grimont swarms with their *tirailleurs*; we can see their red breeches through the trees, and they also acquaint us with their presence by firing occasionally at our cavalry patrols when they imagine they come too near the wood. Last night I went on the farthest *feldwache*, just behind the village of Nouilly, and I remained there during the night with the lieutenant in command. As soon as he relieved his predecessors, he threw forward a sergeant's party into Nouilly, with orders to hold it till daylight. About one o'clock in the morning our cavalry patrols, supported by an infantry detachment, felt their way to the edge of the Bois de Grimont, and then encountered a fierce but wild discharge of musketry. They fell back on the sergeant's party in Nouilly, who held the place till they could discern the advance of large detachments of French troops. The shots had stirred up the three battalions lying in and around Mey, and they had come out on the rampage to annihilate the patrols and whatever else should come in their way. The Prussian sergeant in Nouilly, however, quietly fell back on his supporting *feldwache*, where the lieutenant stood fast till he could see the French.

men swarming into Nouilly, and then we fell back on the *repli*, which in turn supported the *feldwache*. It did one good to see the coolness of the officer, a young lieutenant, not to all appearance over twenty-five, but who wears the '66 medal. I asked him why, looking at the seeming strength of the approaching force, he did not give a general alarm. The apparatus for this purpose is complete. A fusee thrown into the bonfire on the edge of the *repli* post would bring 40,000 men under arms in ten minutes, and the artillery galloping to the front in a quarter of an hour. But it was exactly the responsibility of such a general disturbance that prevented him from crying "Wolf"—although, to my judgment, there seemed cause enough. The event proved how well Lieutenant von Versin had learned to calculate contingencies. The French were content temporarily to occupy Nouilly, and after a brief stay fell back on their original position at Mey. But if he refrained from giving the alarm, he did not allow a single precaution to escape him. His company was extended in skirmishing order on both sides of the post, ready to retard the French advance should it have taken place. As it was, a great number of shots were exchanged, but no harm was done on either side.

Around the church of this village there is a *repli* post, occupied by a company. The church itself, by the way, is a very interesting structure. Of great age and considerable architectural pretensions, it has been pounded with shells more severely than any building I have ever seen. The French pelted it on one side, the Prussians on the other. The steeple was originally square, now it is roughly round; there are great gaps in the walls and holes in the roof, and the birds are singing merrily in the half-ruined structure. The *curé* has remained by his church, and, strange to say, his residence has escaped with very little damage. The colonel is his guest, or rather he is the colonel's guest, for he has nothing to eat but what is purveyed by our worthy *Oberst*. The good *curé* speaks German fluently, and gets a salute from everybody he passes; he takes the firing very coolly, and seems in remarkably good spirits, all things considered. But to return to my *repli* round the shattered church. Of the officer who was in charge of it for the day I am here the especial guest, and I found my way into his shanty after coming off *repli* in the morning. Till about one o'clock all was quiet—the men lay about on the straw, smoking or sleeping, and the vedettes, a hundred yards to our front, circled leisurely. Suddenly there came a spattering Chassepôt fire from the riflemen on the little Belle Croix, directed against an infantry patrol which was beating the foreground. The bullets came

whistling over the *repli* post as the lieutenant and myself jumped up to see what was the matter. One hit the ground a little to our front, ricocheted between us, and lodged in the arm of a soldier who was lying down a little in our rear. The order was for all to get under cover immediately, but Lieutenant Werth had some difficulty in getting obeyed, so eager were his fellows to see what was going on. He himself stood coolly exposed as the bullets came whistling by, minding them no more than if they had been so many buzzing flies. Firing with the French is infectious, and it was taken up all along the line as far as Mey, for what reason it was impossible to say. The Prussians did not think it worth while to reply, and the vedettes phlegmatically continued their circling. In about an hour the French fire died away, having, so far as I am aware, occasioned no casualty, save the wound to the man in our *repli*.

About two o'clock we observed that a Prussian battery, stationed across the valley at a place named Longeau, about a mile nearer Metz than St. Germain (where was finished the battle of Gravelotte), and on the great road between Metz and Paris, was firing shells down into the valley below. Everybody expected to see St. Quentin interfere with this game, which it could easily have done, for Longeau is not above a mile and a half from that fort; but its grim sides remained without a single wreath of smoke, while the white puffs continued rising rapidly from the battery at Longeau. Presently a great smoke arose in the valley, evidently the result of the shell-fire, and with the combined aid of our glasses and our maps, we made out that the village of Moulins-les-Metz was burning. This village is close to St. Ruffine, and adjacent to the river, between which latter and the village there is an earthwork. Our conjecture was that French troops were engaged in strengthening this earthwork when the Prussians opened fire, and that a casual shell set light to Moulins. It burned fiercely till late in the evening. A little burning job is chalked out on this side for to-night. The village of Nouilly before us here is known to have in it considerable stores of provisions, secreted by the villagers, who are now inside Metz. The Prussians cannot succeed in unearthing these stores, but the peasants revealed the secret to their countrymen, and it is believed that the French troops last night took some food away with them. The effectual means to prevent a repetition of this is to burn the village, and with it the secret stores which it contains, and this project it is intended to carry out to-night.

During the afternoon Plappeville fired a few shells from its great guns on the west side, and St. Julien also sent a few in the

direction of the Moselle, but the fire seemed more *pour passer le temps* than anything else. All the morning, on the space before their camp, between St. Julien and Les Bottes, the French infantry were drilling assiduously in considerable numbers. We could see their bayonets glittering brightly in the sun. On the environs of Fort St. Julien are observable considerable numbers of horses grazing, but, although I looked carefully with my glass, I could not discern a single bullock.

Flanville, October 1.—This morning, between nine and ten o'clock, the guns of Mont St. Quentin sent a few shots in the direction of Gravelotte, whether by way of a friendly morning salute, or to cover a sortie in that direction, we have here no means of learning as yet. However, a little later in the day, there was observable a great cloud of dust between St. Julien and the town of Metz, between the intervening swell. This could only be ascribed to the march of a large force in the direction of Mont St. Quentin and Plappeville, and it may be that a more serious attack may take place to-night in the direction I have indicated. Between twelve and one Fort St. Julien also gave tongue, sending a few shots over the Moselle in the direction of Woippy; but there was a long interval between each discharge, and it did not appear as if anything serious was going on opposite to us.

A siege is proverbially tedious work, especially when that siege takes the form of "masterly inactivity" on the part of the investing force. There is not much for one to chronicle, except when a sortie takes place, and a forepost skirmish may be reckoned quite a godsend. I have not even a skirmish to write about, and perhaps, in the dearth of other matter, a short sketch of the manner of our life here in the front may not be unacceptable to your readers.

The whole of the battalion to which I almost consider myself as belonging—the 2nd of the 4th Regiment—lies in this village, which is very small. The men are packed closely in the houses, occupying lofts, passages, sheds, and every other available shred of cover. The officers occupy two châteaux, both of which were beautiful residences before war laid them waste. The colonel's château still has its garden undestroyed—a paradise of sweet scented flowers, with here a fountain and there a leafy bower. Our château has had harder fortune. A company of men, as well as a number of officers, occupy its spacious chambers; on the lawn outside are stacked the needle-guns, ready for immediate use, and the flower-beds are trodden down almost beyond the power of recognition. A *corporal-schaft* occupies the conservatory, and the flower-garden is converted into a drill-ground. The château was pelted by the French in

the battle of the 1st of September—it is hardly now outside the range of their guns—and the roof has been shattered by shells. We occupy the drawing-room, in which are two great mirrors reaching to the roof. The one over the mantelpiece has been penetrated by a bullet exactly in the centre, and is fantastically starred in all directions.

In the grey morning, unless we have been previously roused by firing on the front, the soldier-servants come into our drawing-room bedroom, bringing the morning coffee. Long before, the soldiers on the other side of the partition have been stirring, and they are the merriest, the most noisy set of “Kerle” imaginable. After coffee, drill begins. The young soldiers are at the goose-step in the flower-garden; the older hands practising skirmishing by companies in the neighbouring vineyards. At nine comes *appell*—a kind of parade without arms, at which the clothes and accoutrements of the men are carefully inspected. The *appell* only takes place occasionally, but the under-officers have a minor *appell* every day, at each of which in turn there is an inspection of a separate article. Now it is arms, now boots, now cloaks. The under-officer is responsible for the condition of his *schaft* or squad, and he takes care he shall not incur a reprimand through any want of vigilance. After *appell* the officers breakfast. The feeding is homely, and eaten in a homely fashion—clean plates, or plates of any kind, not being plentiful, and the glass-ware decidedly deficient. But there never wants a hearty appetite; and for a guest like myself a hearty welcome and a frank kindness that I never can forget. Breakfast over, comes an interval of visiting, gossiping, and beer-drinking; for we have our own *marketender* on the lawn, and Saarbruck is only forty miles away. Some write, some read, others sleep: it is astonishing how much sleep it takes to tire some people. The men employ themselves in tailoring, in seeing to the rations, in conducting the cooking of the dinner, and in smoking in the bright sunshine. Dinner is rather a discursive meal; you imagine you have finished it when you have eaten of the rice, the soup, and the mincemeat in your own particular room, but going the round you find another mess devoting their attention to plums and *schinken*, and you join in of course. Then you go a little farther, and find the inmates of another room topping off with chocolate or coffee and a *petit verre*. Of course you are asked to partake, and equally of course you do so. After dinner is the siesta. The quarters are then as quiet as in the dead of night. In an hour or two a sprightly officer awakens, and assiduously devotes himself to the stirring up of his drowsy brother officers. A pack of cards comes to the surface somehow, and presently the round table

is surrounded by a circle of card-players, the game proceeding with a considerable amount of noise, owing to a habit most Prussians have of all speaking at once, each at the top of his voice. Those who are not at the card-table stroll out to visit the brother-officer who is on the *repli*, drop in upon the worthy major and colonel, whom they find placidly smoking in their beautiful garden, or watch Fort St. Julien and the French tents through their glasses. Deep as the interest may be in the game which is being played at the card-table, that and all other local interest fades into nothing at the appearance of the under-officer who has been over to head-quarters to the *feld-post*. It is good to watch the countenances as the letters, hurriedly opened, are being pored over with eager faces. The eyes of the portly Dantzic *premier-lieutenant* on the sofa become strangely moist as the crumpled fuchsia and rosebud drop out of his letter, the fragrance still clinging about them as when they had been placed there as a love-token from the children he has left at home. What is that which the handsome young lieutenant hurriedly clutches as it falls out of the envelope, and pushes inside his tunic on the side next his heart? I don't think it is a bill from his tailor. He would not smile so if it were a dunning letter he was reading, and the most gushing man is not addicted to the practice of stealthily kissing a letter from his tailor ere he consigns it to his breast-pocket. Depend upon it the lieutenant is happy in the knowledge that the girl of his heart, far away on the shores of the Baltic, has not forgotten him. The domestic side of the German character comes out very strong in this interval of letter-reading. Nearly all the officers of the 4th are from the same district, and the letter of one officer commonly contains messages to others who at home are friends and neighbours. I was amused to-day by the amazed delight of a grizzled officer who must have seen close on fifty years, when he looked at the superscription of one of his letters. "*Gott in himmel!* it's from the old mother," he cried. Then came quite a gush of interest as to the age of the old lady, and when he told us with some pride that she was close on ninety, the "*Donnerwetter*" were many and hearty. After the letters come the perusal of the newspapers and gossiping as to their contents, and the probable tactics of Bismarck—it is always Bismarck who is named. When darkness falls, we have music and dancing. One of our volunteers is a brilliant instrumentalist, and he comes down from his lofty abode near the roof, and plays our piano in the drawing-room. Now it is "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," the officers chiming in with the words, and the men on the farther side of the partition and out in the

environs taking up the strain, till the volume of sound must sweep over the glades and the ruined vineyards to the French field-watches outside Belle Croix and St. Julien. I wonder what they think of the melody, and how they like it as a reply to the shouts, "A Berlin!" "A Berlin!" with which they made the Boulevards ring not three short months ago? Now it is a waltz which the young volunteer plays, and then the spectacle would greatly delight Mr. Spurgeon, who is an advocate for male dancing with male. A lissom young officer, who, if he were not a gallant fellow with medals on his breast, would have made a capital dancing-master, treats us to a burlesque rendering of the *cancan*, and the music gets into the head of a rotund officer of middle age, who executes the most fantastic capers with a suppleness, and at the same time a gravity, that sets everybody in a roar. He infects the rest, and for the time one might imagine he was in the company of a congregation of dancing dervishes. But we must not keep the men awake, and, in truth, nobody cares to be a late sitter himself. By ten o'clock we are all in bed, the whole place wrapped in slumber, save the sentries who surround us with a cordon through which a mouse could not creep. No more could a mouse creep into or out of Metz. The sentry's orders are precise to allow nobody to pass through after nightfall on any pretext whatever. Last night an officer and myself, who had been out on the foreposts, allowed darkness to overtake us before our return. As we approached the chain of sentries, the stern "halt" came to us through the darkness. "Officer," was the reply, but it availed nothing—notwithstanding that the sentry belonged to the officer's own regiment. We had to stand till a party came to conduct us to the guard, and then the officer went back and praised the sentry for the creditable manner in which he had done his duty.

Noisseville, October 2.—Yesterday afternoon orders suddenly reached the 4th Regiment to get ready for a march. The report went round that the corps was to be relieved from the siege and be despatched to Paris, whereat there was great rejoicing, and the *cancan* and the capers over again. But the anticipations were doomed to disappointment. Our destination was this place, only about a mile from Flanville, and farther to the front. We are now on the utmost verge of the first line. The whole village is within range of the guns of St. Julien, and with the exception of a few houses it was burned by the shell-fire in the actions of the 31st August and 1st September. The men sleep in their accoutrements, ready to clutch their arms in a moment when the alarm is given. I go on field-watch to-day with the friend whose quarters I share, and hope to see some-

thing there worth description. Do you know in England that the Bavarians have now before Paris three batteries of improved mitrailleuses made at Augsburg? They scatter their fire far more widely than the French mitrailleuses.

October 3.—In my letter of yesterday I mentioned that it was in contemplation to burn the village of Nouilly last night, and early this morning I sent a telegram, briefly narrating the successful accomplishment of the project. In no sense of the word could it be called an important operation; but as a thoroughly well planned and conducted little affair, I think it may merit a detailed account, especially as nothing of more importance has occurred lately within the neighbourhood. I think I mentioned yesterday that the reason why it was determined to destroy the village of Nouilly was that it contained—or, at least, was believed to contain—considerable stores of provisions, which, however, were so secreted, in the cellars and elsewhere, that the Prussians could not discover them. The inhabitants, however, had for the most part taken refuge in Metz, and it was natural that they should inform their military countrymen of the whereabouts of the provisions. It was equally natural that men on short commons should do their best to obtain all the food they could, from whatever source; and it is believed that when the French outposts temporarily occupied Nouilly the night before last, they succeeded in carrying away with them some stores. The place lies so directly under the fire of Fort St. Julien and Les Bottes, that it is hardly tenable permanently by a Prussian force, and therefore there was no resource but to burn it.

A little after eight o'clock last night I was sitting at supper with Lieutenants von Hosius and Fischer, of the 5th company of the 2nd battalion of the 4th Regiment. The quarters these good gentlemen occupied would hardly have been considered eligible by a London working-man looking for lodgings. The house had been burnt out twice, and the bare walls were now roofed in with a few planks loosely covered with straw. Door and window were both gone, but their place was not inefficiently supplied with blankets. There happened to be left a tolerably decent table, and one side of the apartment was littered with straw for a bed. We eat rather promiscuously here. If any one has anything exceptionally good for supper it is sure to ooze out, and then the fortunate man has an exceptional number of callers, who "drop in promiscuous" just as the dainty dish is set upon the table. The dainty dish on this occasion consisted of salt herrings boiled with onions, and washed down with beer warmed with meal and schnapps. Lieutenant Fischer understands no English, but can express

his meaning pantomimically in a manner which I never saw equalled. As a linguist Mr. von Hosius has a great superiority over his comrade. He knows some English. It is true his knowledge is not of a varied character. So far as I am aware, it is confined to "Good night," with which he takes delight in saluting me about five in the morning, and a verse of "Lucy Long," with which he invariably essays to follow up the conversation. Between the salt herrings, my German, Mr. Fischer's pantomime, and Mr. von Hosius's "Lucy Long," we were getting on as well as could be expected, when a *feldwebel* entered with an order for Lieutenant von Hosius, which the latter read aloud:—

"Lieutenant von Hosius will parade at nine o'clock with fifteen volunteers of his company, and will proceed forward to burn the village of Nouilly."

Von Hosius is fond of salt herrings, and he is fond, too, of an opportunity of distinguishing himself. The Iron Cross for valour is already in his button-hole. There were still herrings on the plate, and the hour was only half-past eight. Fischer, by his direction, went outside to call for volunteers, while he finished the herrings. The men lay about in a couple of dismantled rooms, and in the garden at the back of the house. "Volunteers to burn a village!" roared Fischer, into the midst of the sleeping "Kerle." Had he thrown a bomb among them he could not have caused a more instantaneous and universal start. Volunteers! He wanted fifteen, and here was the whole company round him like bees. He picked his fifteen, taking the men who had no wives at home in the Fatherland, and then came back to see if the mulled beer was done. By this time Von Hosius had demolished the *ultimus Romanorum* of the herrings, and, as time was short, was setting about getting ready in the most systematic manner. Having pulled on his long boots, he pulled out of his portmanteau the little dagger which every officer wears to ward off the vultures of the battlefield in case of being wounded, and thrust his "Adam" revolver into his belt. Then, with a final glass of the queer beer, he sallied out to the spot where his little band was drawn up waiting for him, and gave them a word or two of advice and precaution.

In truth, the undertaking was a most dangerous one. It partook, indeed, not a little of the nature of a forlorn hope. A few hundred yards in the rear of Nouilly we, it is true, had a *feldwache*, but the French were nearer it on the other side, by Mey and the Bois de Grimont, and had strong temptations for entering it by night. It might be that he might encounter

a force of French inside the village. In that case, of what service would be his fifteen volunteers? It was almost certain that, if this contingency should not occur, the party would encounter a fierce foe in the execution of their task; and it was probable that on their return they would be shelled both by St. Quentin and Les Bottes. I left Hosius giving his order, and went on to the forepost ground, across which he must pass to get across the *weinberg*, and down into the valley in which Nouilly lies. In a few minutes came the measured tread of the little party, marching at the Prussian quick step, which is faster than that of any army I know. Von Hosius as he passed hailed me laughingly with a parting "Miss Lucy, Lucy Long," and then disappeared in the darkness. For a while we could hear the crashing of the little band through the vines, and then came the hoarse challenge of the *feldwache* rear sentry. Then all became quiet.

The group by the watch-fire on the *repli* ground gave sufficient evidence of the ticklish character of the enterprise. For a few minutes the officer in command of the *repli* and myself were the only persons who enjoyed its genial warmth. Then through the gloom came stalking the major, and after a long look towards Nouilly, he squatted silently down by our side. Presently another form appeared, that of the genial colonel himself, who had been moved to forsake the society of the *curé* to come and see what success Von Hosius should meet with. I don't know exactly how they came, but in half an hour nearly all the officers of the battalion were around the bright wood fire. Everybody tried to appear unconcerned, but it was equally certain everybody was fidgety. The regiment has never yet failed in any duty assigned it, and if it failed now? Nobody liked to broach the subject, but I could see it was uppermost in the mind of all. And Von Hosius was a tantalizingly long time in putting us out of our suspense. An hour had gone—Nouilly is but ten minutes forward from Noisseville—and the colonel's nervousness was undisguised as he hacked at the burning log with his naked sword, and drove his spur into the leg of his chair. The major had taken to walking up and down the inside of the entrenchment, and only the adjutant exhibited a thorough *nonchalance*; but then he was very sleepy.

The vigilant lieutenant of the *repli* gave a smothered shout, and we all sprang to our feet. Flame-coloured smoke at last, and plenty of it. But surely, suggested the major, it really cannot be so far away as that. Why, that lowering smoke is on the other side of the Bois de Grimont, and must be a private bonfire of the French—not the one which Von Hosius was

to fire. It was too true—the alarm was a false one. The colonel sat down again moodily, and the major began to mutter something that seemed to me very like swearing. As for the adjutant, he went to sleep, and I very nearly followed his example. One thing was favourable—the dead silence that reigned in the valley. It was evident that Von Hosius had encountered no French in the place, or the rattle of the musketry would have been heard long ere now, and the battalion, which was standing to its arms at the various company posts, would have been lining the entrenchment with the needle-guns poked over the earthwork.

Another half-hour of suspense, and then a loud “Ha!” simultaneously from the lieutenant on duty and the sentry. This time it was Nouilly, and no mistake. Von Hosius had taken his time, that he might do his work thoroughly. Not from one isolated house, but in six places at once, belched out the long streaks of flame against the black darkness, and the separate fires made as much haste to connect themselves as ever did commanders who were eager to feel their supporters’ right and left. In ten minutes the whole place was in one grand blaze, the church steeple standing up in the midst of the sea of flame, as if it had round its turret the old motto of the Scottish Kirk, “*Nec tamen consumebatur*. But, church steeple as it was, it had not the attribute of the burning bush, and a whole pyrotechnic display of sparks bore testimony to its fall. Here and there against the flame could be seen a human figure in frantic flight, and on a bluff, just outside the village, I saw in the strong light a woman standing wringing her hands. These were the innocent victims of war—the victims not of the Prussians, but of him in whose ears the poor serfs would three months ago have shouted, “Vive l’Empereur!”

Presently we heard again the crashing through the vinebrake, and out outpost sentry challenge. The watchword was returned in the hearty voice of Von Hosius, and in five minutes more the little party was inside the entrenchment of the *repli*. Von Hosius, of rather a portly figure, was panting with the exertion of climbing the vine hill, but he found breath enough to greet me with “Miss Lucy, Lucy Long.” The affair was singularly successful. The duty had been executed without the necessity of exchanging a single shot. The village, which burnt till five this morning, had been so effectually fired that all the stores which it might have contained must have been burnt; and so coolly had the enterprise been gone about, that a respectable old horse which was found in one of the stables of the village was led back in triumph as a trophy. I suppose

the French held their fire because they did not know whither to direct it. To have shelled Nouilly would only have been to play into the hands of the Prussians, and the destroying party might have come from Servigny, Noisseville, the Brasserie, or Montoy. It would therefore have been a useless waste of ammunition to have shelled the supposed path of their retreat, when it was not known in what direction that retreat was; and St. Julien was civil, and refrained from shelling our *repli* in front of Noisseville. I lay down among the straw, and went to sleep with the echo of "Miss Lucy, Lucy Long," still haunting my ears.

I was present this morning at the very interesting ceremony of the distribution to the 4th Regiment of the iron crosses awarded to members of it for valour in the field. The ceremony took place at Puche, the head-quarters of the general of the division, who personally distributed the crosses in the presence of the officers of the regiment. The band played the old regimental air, the "Hohenfriedberg," and the colours were on the ground. The gallant 4th has earned no fewer than twenty crosses already, and the award seemed to have been made with the most rigid impartiality, the men taking their full share of the coveted distinction with their officers. The 4th is one of the old regiments of the Prussian service, and its annals record a long and gallant career. Its regimental march, the name of which I have just mentioned, is secured to it by a special Royal order, in remembrance of the valour which it displayed at the battle of Hohenfriedberg fought in 1745.

October 4.—Up in the front here we get to look upon the fortresses environing the town of Metz much as the Naples people regard and talk of Mount Vesuvius when that mountain is in an uneasy condition. For a whole day St. Julien has been quiet. St. Quentin has not emitted a single puff of smoke, and Les Bottes might have been a flower-garden tended by pretty girls. This at least was the case up till eleven o'clock this forenoon, and the martial population of Noisseville were taking it as easy as discipline will permit on the foreposts. To the left of the Brasserie, a post I have already named, lying on the *chaussée* and parallel to Noisseville on the south, a large body of Prussian troops were engaged in constructing large wooden barracks, just in rear of the entrenchment line. These are being built for the accommodation of the troops who now occupy the Brasserie, which has been reduced to ruins by the many bombardments which it has undergone. The French in Les Bottes could see the progress of this work, and the number of the men engaged in

it; and the idea seemed to strike them that it might not be out of place to attempt to interrupt the building operations. Anyhow, they commenced rather a fierce shell-fire on the unfinished barracks, and also on the unfortunate Brasserie, under the shelter of which the working party was withdrawn when the first grenade came hurtling over the trees. The Brasserie must by this time be thoroughly well used to these pleasant visitors, and there is this consolation for it, that if it were exploded bodily it could not be ruined much more utterly than now. All that it is good for is that the heap of stones, which once composed a rather imposing structure, should afford shelter for troops drawn up in the rear. But even this office the Brasserie is now incapable of performing. The shells send its loose stones flying in all directions, and it was thus that several men were wounded yesterday morning. The contagion of firing was communicated by Les Bottes to the foreposts. These began blazing away at each other in a very level fashion, the Prussians replying to the French fire with the Chassepôts, the use of which they have been practising so sedulously for the last few days. Everybody has got so much used to this intermittent outpost fire, that the only notice it met with was a whistle occasionally from some soldier moving about our village when a bullet hurtled past him, or hit the wall a yard or two above his head. From firing at the wooden barracks and the Brasserie, Les Bottes took it into its head to chuck a few shells at Servigny, the village to our right, and then St. Julien chimed in with his great cannon-balls. Noisseville occupied an intermediate position between the Brasserie and Servigny, but up till about one o'clock it had unaccountably escaped the polite attentions of the two French forts. About that hour, however, a great cannon-ball came whistling across from St. Julien, crashed through the wall of a house in which most of the officers were quartered, and tumbled in among the stacked arms in an open space in the street, making a hole in which a horse might have been burried. Nobody was hurt, but the paymaster was nearly smothered with the *débris* which fell from the wall through which the great ball passed. Les Bottes followed St. Julien's example in firing into Noisseville, the latter projecting 42lb. and 64lb. shells, the former confining himself to cannon-balls. It was a great waste of powder and shot. Nobody was hurt, and all the effect was that a village, already for the most part burnt and in ruins, was destroyed a little more. The church was terribly wrecked by the cannon of St. Julien. Already the exterior had been knocked out of shape, but the inside retained much of its original integrity. A ball from St. Julien yesterday crashed right through the

altar, and brought the cross on to the pavement in splinters. The fragment of a shell from Les Bottes shivered a beautiful marble monument, splitting it right up the centre, and cutting in two the commemoration of the merits of a respectable defunct villager. The Virgin Mary, as she stood in marble against the wall, had a limb amputated, and was otherwise dismembered, and if the pastor had been in the pulpit when another shell struck it he would never have preached more. So hot became the cross-fire from the two fortresses, that it was judged advisable to withdraw the troops out of the village a few hundred yards to the rear. The *feldwachts* were of course left in their positions, as also were two companies in the *repli* by the church; but the rest fell back into an orchard behind the village. It was great fun to be here and listen to the French pelting the village, under the idea, no doubt, that it was full of Prussian troops. We could hear the crashing of the rafters and the smashing of the walls as the huge projectiles tore through them, the shells exploding as they struck, and sending into the air a cloud of fragments. All this time the musketry fire on the foreposts was unceasing along a large portion of the line, and any one dropping in casually upon the scene would have imagined quite an important battle was in progress. So little was this the case that the troops supporting Noisseville and lying in Flanville and Retonfay were not put under arms. The whole affair was an utterly useless ignition of powder, and its only effect was to suspend for the day the construction of the wooden barracks. When the firing had ceased we came back into the village, and several of us found that the quarters which we had quitted at one o'clock were no longer in existence at five. A few houses more or less ground to powder in Noisseville is quite a trifle when the whole village may be called a ruin. It surprised me to observe with what extraordinary force some of the projectiles had fallen. In a field beyond the church there was a hole in the earth that might almost have served as the shaft of a mine. It marked the spot where had fallen a shell from Les Bottes. The pioneers dug it out in the evening. They had to go to a depth of about six feet. The huge ugly affair had not exploded, and two men extricated it gently, and bore it in triumph, quite a little procession following, to lay it at the feet of the colonel. The shell was a 64-pounder. Just fancy a missile of this magnitude striking a man full in the chest! It would hurl him in little pieces in all directions. Or fancy it exploding in the centre of a group, or in the heart of a column, and scattering its great skin, an inch and a half thickness of metal, in a shower of morsels, each about two inches

square. Till nightfall the outpost firing was continued, but it seemed more to while away the time than for any other reason.

This morning, in the neighbourhood of Courcelles, I witnessed what has been a rarity during this campaign—a Prussian soldier undergoing punishment. There is no flogging in the Prussian army, even during war time. In peace the punishments are—middle arrest, which consists of confinement in a light room, containing a wooden bed. Severe arrest consists of confinement in black darkness, with the ground for a bed. Bread and water is the fare in each case. Severe arrests cannot be ordered for more than five weeks—it being reckoned that longer confinement of the kind is calculated to undermine the constitution. In war time there is still the middle arrest. A prisoner is sent to the guard, and when a forward march is made, he is handed over to the succeeding guard. During war, however, this punishment is never ordered for more than four days. Severe arrest is impracticable in war time in the enemy's country. For it is substituted the punishment of "tying to a tree." Two hours on the tree are reckoned equivalent to twenty-four hours' severe arrest, and the maximum of this punishment is also four days. A still more severe punishment consists in the offender being sent home to Germany to be dealt with by the military authorities there. I believe, if the punishment consists merely in the enforced return from the scene of action, it would be as great a deterrent as a court-martial and a military prison. It was a man "on the tree" whom I saw this morning. The punishment undoubtedly is severe. He was tied round the tree by the arms, by the waist, and by the feet, so as to be unable to touch the ground as a support; his face was turned to the tree that he might see nothing, and the hot sun was beating down upon his back. I have been now for two months and a half with the Prussian armies, and this is the first man I have seen undergoing punishment.

"Before Metz!" What a wide, what a convenient expression it is, to be sure! I should like to have some definition of where "before Metz" ends. It must include an unprecedented radius of country. Remilly must be quite fifteen miles from the beleaguered fortress; yet it is "before Metz," according to the gentlemen who write their letters there, in the luxury of a good hotel—their information derived from officers and railway guards, while the down train from Courcelles halts for its fifteen minutes. Pont-à-Mousson—where also there are good hotels—is likewise "before Metz," and I am not at all sure that Luxemburg, forty miles away, is not within the

same comprehensive radius. I am certain that Saarbruck is. All the localities surrounding Metz have names, and there is no occasion for the assumption of mystery or the resort to such a generality as "before Metz." All the conditions involved in being really "before Metz" is a liability to have the house you inhabit shelled about your ears, to have a Chassepôt bullet disturb your thoughts as you are taking a meditative stroll, to sleep on straw, to eat black bread, and for your drink to chance what an enterprising *marketender* may purvey. There is no doubt some difficulty in getting within the reach of these eligible amenities without an adequate authorization, and without this also there is an absolute impossibility of circulating freely about the foreposts; but if one is provided with this, no condition of secrecy is imposed on him to prevent him from writing freely what he sees, nor has he any occasion to resort to the ambiguous "before Metz."

Retonfay, October 5.—This morning, at five o'clock, after a night passed under arms in expectation of an attack, the 4th Regiment quitted Noisseville and marched to this place, about a mile to the rear, and the second line. Four days of the first line and of *feldwache* duty is quite enough at a time, and it is right that the several regiments of a division should relieve each other in the arduous duty. During the night I am told that Les Bottes and St. Julien renewed the firing on Noisseville. I slept so soundly that I was in blessed ignorance of the circumstance, but when I turned out this morning I fell into a hole that was the crater of an exploded shell about two paces from the place where once there was a door. Several other shells fell in the immediate vicinity, and the poor church got another blow or two. The 4th was relieved by the 44th Regiment, with whom it exchanged quarters. The Staff of the 3rd Brigade lies here in a beautiful château, which has suffered very little from the war. All three battalions of the 4th now lie in Retonfay, where they will probably remain for a few days, and then go down to the foreposts again. Military duty in Noisseville was so severe that no officer was at liberty to quit the place for so long as an hour. The consequence of this was that I was unable to continue my rides round the besieging army in the company of the gentleman who acted so admirably as my cicerone on the day of my arrival. I could, of course, have ridden about alone, but I should have been liable to continual interruption; and with my imperfect knowledge of localities, I should have derived comparatively little advantage from my expeditions. Here, however, he is again at liberty, and we have arranged a journey for this afternoon as far as the Moselle, on the northern side of the town. We

are to ride through the Landwehr divisions that lie to the north of us, and I look forward with great interest to the excursion, since I have not as yet seen any considerable number of the Landwehr under arms.

October 6.—After despatching my letter of yesterday, I made a journey, along with an officer of the 4th, as far as the Moselle to the northward of Fort St. Eloy. We everywhere traversed the extreme edges of the foreposts, and the ride was a very interesting one. From Retonfay we struck the first line at the unfortunate Servigny—that once pretty village against which St. Julien seems to have an especial spite. There is not much of Servigny left to speak of—a few gable-ends of walls, and here and there the walls of a house without a roof. A battalion of the 45th contrives somehow to find quarters among the ruins, and a few villagers still wander about in a ghostly fashion. From Servigny we passed over a considerable ridge to the charming village of Poix, lying snugly at the opening of a valley which tends downward towards the Moselle. This village is surrounded in all directions by beautiful villas, the summer residences of the wealthier inhabitants of Metz. An isolated suburb near the top of the ridge has suffered severely from the fire of St. Julien—indeed the shells were bursting around it as we passed; but the village itself has not been much injured, and the Prussian troops have respected its amenities in a very surprising manner. A division general dwells amid roses and honeysuckles in one of the principal châteaux, built in rustic Elizabethan, and beautifully furnished; the field-post inhabits a rustic gardener's lodge in the grounds. Vremy lies a little to the rear, in the bottom of the valley, which here assumes the character of a gorge, and the road compels a *détour* into it, which is repaid by the observation of the admirable manner in which its houses and churchyard walls have been converted into defensive works, thoroughly blocking up the gorge. Leaving Vremy and the hospitable officers who dwelt therein, we rode down the valley to Failly, a considerable village, in which, until a few days ago, were the head-quarters of General Kummer, commanding the Landwehr divisions who lined this section of the environment; but the Landwehr have now gone across to the other side of the Moselle, and at Failly the 7th Army Corps touches with its left the extreme right of the 1st Army Corps, of which the 4th Regiment forms a part. From Failly there is a direct road to the Moselle at Malroy, but by a slight *détour* the opportunity offered itself of getting very close to the Bois de Grimont, which is full of French troops, and of inspecting at a comparatively short distance

the fortress of St Julien. A Prussian officer in Faily told us laughingly that there were two very beautiful young women in Villers l'Orme, the village which is so near to the Bois de Grimont, and I am not certain that this information did not operate with my companion as an additional reason for visiting the place. L'Orme is a very prettily situated little village, just on the edge of the table-land on which stand Grimont and St. Julien. We saw nothing of the beautiful maidens, but the place is full of inhabitants, and the children were playing merrily about, quite regardless, to all appearance, of the fact that the place is within 300 yards of the French outposts. L'Orme is unoccupied by the Prussians during the day. At night a small party, under the command of an under-officer, go forward and take up a position behind it. Occasionally, stragglers from the French outposts visit it in search of food. From the shelter of one of its houses we could see the French outposts quite easily with the naked eye—the men cooking or lying down, and the sentries walking to and fro. Behind was the forest, and then the monastery of Grimont, while over the whole of the quiet little scene St. Julien frowned grimly, casting forward his dark shadow in the afternoon sunlight. L'Orme has wonderfully escaped the ravages of war. Both parties seem to have agreed to respect it, probably on account of the number of villagers who still continue to reside in it. I was told that not a single shell had been fired into the village. But while we were there, the shells were flying over our heads towards Vany and Faily, and it seemed strange to see the children playing in the street, the girls driving home the cows, and the old women placidly spinning in front of their doors, when the missiles were whistling through the air above their heads.

The French respect L'Orme, but they have no such tenderness for anybody who may happen to traverse the space which intervenes between L'Orme and Chiculles. The tract leads athwart an open field with a hedge in the rear, and the French posts line the wood continuously, at a distance of about 300 yards. The distance is about half a mile, and unless we chose to make a very considerable *détour*, there was no alternative but to run the gauntlet. My military friend went first, at a brisk hand canter. He had hardly shown his horse's head beyond the cover of the houses of L'Orme when the Frenchmen commenced saluting him with Chassepôt bullets. I followed at a short interval, and as the bullets came thicker and faster our canter became a gallop. The horses were fresh, and also desperately timid; ever as a bullet whistled past them and cut the twigs in the hedge, they gave a bound and a shy

that necessitated very close adhesion to the pig-skin. I was by no means sorry when we got into Chieulles, a village a little farther retired from the pointblack range of fire, and which has by mutual consent been hitherto reckoned a neutral territory—that is, it is neither occupied by French nor Prussians. There are in it plenty of inhabitants, who seem to have got quite familiarized to their strange position, and who carry on their ordinary avocations as if the war were miles away. The village is rather a large one, and contains many pretentious buildings. From it our road lay to the left rear, to a *feldwache* outside the village of Vany, and then into the village itself. The French outposts gave us one parting salute as we sallied out of Chieulles, and this evoked a response from the *feldwache*, for which we were making. We left the hostile outposts firing away at each other very briskly, and rode forward, accompanied by a cavalry officer, into Charly, a beautiful village, containing many chateaux, and standing embowered amidst orchards. Here one of the points of the battle of the 31st of August was contested with great desperation. All around the villages the graves lie thick, now Prussians, now French. The bayonet was at work in the environs of Charly, and in one of its alleys took place a fierce and long-continued hand-to-hand contest. It was very pretty to see how tastefully the Prussian troops had decorated the graves of their dead comrades. They had made them up with turf, and planted flowers and shrubs on the ridge, while at the head of each stood a wooden cross, on which was painted the name and rank of him who lay below. The French graves were not thus tended, but neither were they neglected. Brave soldiers never draw distinctions between the last resting-places of foes and friends. The graves of the French had been surrounded by hedges of shrubs, and the cross had been set up at the head of each.

From Charly we rode on to Malroy, a considerable village lying on the Moselle, about two miles north of Fort St. Julien. It was necessary, however, to ride up the stream some distance to find the first pontoon bridge crossing it at Argancy. Some distance higher up, at Hautconcourt, there is another pontoon bridge, and close to it, at Ennery, is a very large dépôt of provisions and stores for the supply of the northern portion of the besieging army. Immediately on crossing the Moselle, we came among the Landwehr men. They need not fear comparison with the finest regiments of the regular army. So far as I could discern, the only distinction lay in the fact that the Landwehr had more hair on their faces, as a general rule, than the line troops. About seven or eight and twenty seemed the average age of the Landwehr; and as regards a

martial carriage, they would not suffer alongside the Guards.

I rode down to their extreme outposts, in the direction of Fort St. Eloy, at a place called La Maxe, from which we could see the gunners of St. Eloy going about their duties in the fort and the posts which lie on the glacis. The limit of our ride was St. Bgathe, on the slope of the high ground which begins to rise out of the valley at Woippy, and there we found the right of the 10th Army Corps, and also two batteries of heavy siege guns, which were in position against St. Eloy.

Riding leisurely back by a more circuitous route than that we had pursued in going, we were near Failly when the sun disappeared in a glorious setting behind the yellow crest of St. Quentin. Hardly had it disappeared when a flash came from out of the shadow over against St. Agathe. The roar of a heavy gun came booming across the valley, and the sound had not died away before there was another flash and another roar. In five minutes the whole slope, for a distance of nearly a mile and a half, was lit up by continual flashes of artillery fire. Then the fortress of St. Eloy took up the reply, with a slower but steady fire of its heavy guns, their roar coming to us deadened by the thick fog which was rising from the Moselle. The sight in the growing darkness was indescribably grand. We sat on horseback on the summit of the ridge at Poix, watching and listening, till St. Julien thought fit to chime in on his own account, and began throwing big shells on to the ridge by the suburb of Poix on which we were standing. Our horses could not be prevailed upon to contemplate the explosion of these with equanimity, and about eight o'clock we returned to Retonfay, on the plateau of which we found the division general, and nearly all the officers of the five battalions now lying here standing watching and listening to the gun-fire. Soon after eight it began to slacken, and presently died away altogether: all through the night both St. Julien and Les Bottes kept the Prussian lines on the alert by an occasional reminder, consisting of a 24-lb. shell.

The cannonade has not had any immediate effect. Its purpose was to discover what impression heavy guns were likely to make on the fortifications of St. Eloy if used continuously. St. Eloy, if it were taken to-morrow, is not by any means an essential complement to the capture of Metz. On the contrary, Metz could dispense with it without any considerable inconvenience. But it will not be taken to-morrow, nor for many mornings, if its capture is to depend on the effect the cannonade of last night had upon it. Starvation and a direct blockade are the true weapons in the Prussian quiver. These are, beyond doubt, gradually working their effect.

On the 7th of October Marshal Bazaine made another very energetic and serious attempt to break out of Metz in the direction of Thionville, resulting in what has been called the battle of Mézières. The engagement was thus described in a letter written from the field of battle on the same evening:—

Maizières les Metz, October 7, Evening.—I have to-day to give you a narrative of perhaps the most important sortie which Bazaine has made since the Prussians threw their belt of men, guns, and earth around him. That this may be the case is evidenced by the fact, that in the several operations of the day he must have had at least 60,000 men engaged, while the Prussians had considerably more. One of the leading features of the combat was the seemingly casual manner in which it occurred, and I do not know how this can be brought out more forcibly than by recourse to a personal narrative.

Last night I slept in Retonfay, and early in the morning I started northward, with the intention of making the complete circuit of the environment of Metz before my return. I proposed to devote two days to the undertaking, my halting place for the intermediate night being, according to my intention, the head-quarters of my old acquaintance, General von Göben, in command of the 8th Army Corps, somewhere in front of Gravelotte. The morning was dull and misty. As I reached the eminence at Poix I could barely see Mont St. Quentin above the fog in the valley, the sun's rays striking upon its warm grey peak. It seemed as if a general armistice had been declared. Even the forepost fire had dropped, and Metz might have been in Hyde Park, the French on the slope of the Bois de Grimont or Margate Sands. I rode leisurely forward through Vremy, and Vany, and Chieulles, and as I traversed at a canter the critical ground between the last village and Charly, the French outposts, although they were but 300 yards distant, were too lazy to send a bullet in any direction. From Charly I reached Malroy, where the head-quarters of one of the divisions of the 10th Army Corps were stationed, and then forward to Olgy, where, *mirabile dictu*, I found a veritable auberge, with red wine and Gruyère cheese to be had by paying for it. At the foot of the garden of the auberge flowed the Moselle in a great placid stream, and I lunched in a summer-house overhanging its waters. A few hundred yards farther brought me to the village of Argancy, where is the first Prussian forepost bridge; and having crossed it, I made first for the château of Amelange, and afterwards in a direction due Metz-ward, until I reached the farthest *feldwache* at Maxe. Then I struck across the valley, rather to the rear,

first to Grandes and then to Petites Tapes, in both of which there lay only an under-officer's guard of nine men, and avoiding Ladonchamps, by advice, I reached St Rémy, where I found on duty the 59th Landwehr Regiment. Thence my journey lay still athwart the remotest foreposts to Norroy and Plesnois, the latter village being in the heart of the Bois de Saulny, and my road then lay straight southward on to St. Hubert, which is, I believe, the outpost region of the 8th Army Corps. But at Plesnois my horse cast a shoe, and as the road was rugged I was rather in a fix, when there rode past a Staff officer attached to the head-quarters of Baron Schuler von Senden, commanding the 2nd Division of the Landwehr. This gentleman was quartered in Mézières, and he most courteously invited me to return with him thither and be his guest for the night. The offer was too good to be refused, and I returned accordingly. On the return journey this gentleman gave me some most valuable information. In the bombardment of the two previous days the position occupied by the batteries of German heavy guns was at Frenecourt, near the commencement of the rise of the hills some distance to the south-west of Mézières. To speak more precisely, they were stationed on the low heights of Le Horiment, on the rising ground behind which stands an observatory, which commands the whole plain. Marange, the head-quarters of the Prussian 3rd Army Corps, is considerably in the rear of this position. These heavy guns, curiously enough, belong to the State of Hesse-Darmstadt. But the Prussians had batteries, as Mr. ——— told me, considerably beyond Frenecourt. They had six field batteries midway between it and Sennecourt, and on the 6th they had pushed forward a seventh battery as far as Sennecourt itself. From these several positions the bombardment of Fort St. Eloy had been going forward, and also a shell-fire into the village of Ladonchamps, some little distance nearer Metz than St. Rémy, on the line of railway. Till lately this village had been reckoned neutral territory, but on the 2nd October the French had seized it, and established a battery in front of it. The village itself was burnt the same night by Prussian shells, but still the French retained the position, and the Prussian fire of the last few days had been partly directed to the dislodgment of the enemy from a position which was important, as the occupants of it could enfilade the whole front across the valley. On the 6th nearly a thousand shells had been thrown into Ladonchamps and the neighbourhood, and late in the evening the French had evacuated the shattered fragments of a once smiling village. The Prussians at once threw forward troops in its

direction, establishing their *replis* in its rear, and sending forward sergeants' parties to occupy it, and Grandes and Petites Tapes villages, to which its possession was the key. St. Rémy constituted the chief support, and here lay the 59th Regiment of the Landwehr. Maxe, close to the river, and considerably in advance, was occupied by outposts sent forward from the 10th Army Corps, on the other side of the Moselle. The two divisions of the Landwehr stretched right athwart the valley from the bridge at Argancy, where they touched the 10th Army Corps, to near Marange, where they met the 5th, and to them was confided the duty of keeping the flat alluvial tract on the western bank of the Moselle. This was the substance of the information which my friend of the Staff communicated to me on our ride to Mézières. Here I found the head-quarters of General von Kummer, who commands the Landwehr. The men, to a great extent, were located in temporary barracks, which they had themselves constructed, and which did great credit to their ingenuity. About one o'clock I was sitting at lunch with two Staff officers in an arbour in General Kummer's garden, when the guns of the Prussian batteries by Sennecourt began to give tongue. "Only a few Frenchmen loafing round Ladonchamps," observed one of the officers. "There will be nothing serious to-day; there is too much mist in the valley." Certainly it seemed as if he must be right. When I was on the heights at Sennecourt I could not see the villages in the valley below, nor the cathedral of Metz. Our constant landmark, Fort St. Quentin, was utterly invisible. But the roar of the guns grew louder and louder, and then came first one great boom, and then another, from the big guns lying behind, at Frene-court. The officers fidgeted, but still would not own that anything was the matter. But their *nonchalance* gave way when an aide-de-camp came up at the gallop, spreading the alarm everywhere he went, and dashing on the General's quarters for instructions to guide the front. In five minutes more we were all in the saddle, and, after a short gallop, were looking out on the scene of action from the fringe of the wood in front of the châteaux of Brioux and Amelange. That the reader may understand the tactics of Bazaine and the manner in which they were foiled, it will be necessary to give a brief description of the ground. From Metz to Mézières there is a long trough, with a flat bottom—the alluvial margin of the Moselle. This tract is about four English miles wide. On the west it is bounded by the heights I have already named, and nearer Metz by Norroy and Saulny. On the east it is bounded by a lower series of bluffs, on which stand the villages

of Olgy and Malroy; but between them and the flat bottom runs the Moselle, infringing considerably on the flat expanse just opposite Olgy. Across this bottom, at the narrowest parts thus formed, lies a series of villages—the two Tapes and St. Remy, with Maxe and Ladonchamps respectively slightly to the east and west front. More or less, there were Prussian troops in all these. The dispositions detailed to me by the Staff officer had been substantially maintained. Bazaine had laid his scheme with great art. Covered by the dense fog, he had made his dispositions with such adroitness, that when it lifted, a little past one, his arrangements were already all but complete. In the first instance, he directed a strong assault on Ladonchamps. The Landwehr outpost held the place as if they were 10,000 instead of 100 men, and the French sent their infantry swarming into it, while their artillery played upon it. “Only an attempt to reoccupy Ladonchamps,” quoth my friend of the Staff, as he lit a fresh cigar; “the guns will teach them the folly of that, and we can go back to our harbour.” Certainly it seemed, if any argument could be convincing, that the Prussian artillery must be doing so. The white spurts of smoke were visible all round the valley. On the right front the batteries at Sennecourt were hard at work, and also others nearer us on the flat, while the great guns at Frenecourt were sending shells at a low range right over Ladonchamps in among the advancing French. Then, on our left, at Amelange, two other batteries were maintaining a semi-cross fire; and from the bluffs, on the other side of the Moselle, between Olgy and Malroy, the Prussian field artillery were also roaring. But my friend of the Staff was not, for an hour or two at all events, to see the harbour. The attack on Ladonchamps was a diversion. Suddenly the villages of Grandes and Petites Tapes, of St Rémy and Maxe, were overwhelmed by a cataract of Frenchmen. The 59th Landwehr in St Rémy would not fall back, as it should have done in common prudence, but stood up there in the street till the French, having played upon it with their artillery, and rained on it Chassepôt and mitrailleuse bullets, finally pushed backwards the shattered remnant on to the *chaussée* by dint of sheer numbers. The fusilier battalion of the 58th occupied Grandes Tapes, and it occupies Grandes Tapes now, but the occupation consists of the dead and the wounded. The battalion would not give ground, and may be said to have been annihilated as it stood, the men with their backs to the wall and their faces to the foe. The other battalions of the same regiment suffered terribly. So far, then, Bazaine had succeeded. He had reoccupied the chain of villages athwart the valley, and had got a few

batteries of artillery out to their front to reply to the Prussian fire. But the *status quo* he neither wished to nor could retain. The Prussian artillery, throwing its projectiles from three sides of the parallelogram, interfered with the comfortable realization of the latter conception. As regarded the former, it seemed clear that Bazaine would not have done what he had if he did not contemplate something more. That something I have not the remotest doubt was a sortie to establish connections with Thionville. His tactics were well conceived. From St. Rémy and the two Tapes he kept the Prussian fire engrossed, both musketry and artillery. He sent forward from Grandes Tapes great swarms of tirailleurs, who fared extremely ill at the hands of the Landwehr men. But, besides this, he massed a great number of men. There must have been nearly 30,000 in all on the bank of the Moselle under cover of the houses of Maxe, and he sent them forward to cut through the Prussian environment where it was weakest, close to the river. The moment was a critical one. The Landwehr had all been sent forward against the villages, with the exception of one brigade that was in reserve. But the 10th Army Corps had been crossing the pontoon bridge, and massing between the river and Amelange. Their general, Von Voights, was in command of the day's operations, and he gave the order for several regiments to advance. It was a sight never to be forgotten. First came the Fusiliers, extending at a rapid run into skirmishing order, and covering the whole plain with their long thin lines. Then the dense columns of companies of the Grenadiers, the bands playing and the colours unfurled—unwonted sight. But all the work was not left for the infantry to do. The artillery left the villages alone, and concentrated their fire on the advancing columns of the French by the Moselle. Bazaine is singularly weak in field artillery, and the only reply was from the sullen sides of St. Julien or from the ramparts of St. Eloy. But the mitrailleuse venomously sounded its angry whirr, making the skirmishers recoil nervously as they crossed the line of fire, and tearing chasms in the fronts of the solid masses of which they were the forerunners. The artillery and the skirmishers were enough for the French. The dense columns staggered and then broke. Through my glass I could see a continuous *sauve qui peut* into the village of Maxe. But when they had once got stone and lime between them and the Prussians, the French were obstinate, and would go no farther. In vain the Prussian artillery fired on the villages, advancing closer and closer in alternate order of batteries with a precision and rapidity that could not have been exceeded on Woolwich,

Common. That obstinate battery in front of Grandes Tapes would not cease, and the French tirailleurs still lined the *chaussée* in its front. By this time it was nearly four o'clock. A gallant captain of cavalry pulled up as he galloped past me to swear at the French for spoiling his dinner, which had been ordered for four. Alas! the captain will want no more dinners. He had not gone a hundred yards to my right when a shell from St. Julien fell and burst right before him, and blew himself and his horse into fragments. This same shell disturbed a hare, which bounced from its form, and scampered across the battle-field right in a line with the gun-fire. The Landwehr men roared at the sight amid the dropping Chassepôts, and but for the restraint of the officer, I believe that several would have quitted the shelter of the entrenchments to go in chase. As we stood in this suspense a Staff officer galloped along the front line with orders for a general advance to take the villages by storm. The advance, he told me, was to consist of four brigades of the Landwehr, with two brigades of the 10th Army Corps supporting. In a few minutes more the command came sounding along the line, and the men sprang from their cover and went forward with that steady quick step so characteristic of the Prussian marching. The shells from the battery in front of Grandes Tapes tore through the line, the mitrailleuse and Chassepôt bullets poured against it their leaden hail, but still the Landwehr, silent and stern, went steadily to the front. I have been under fire many times, but I never knew a more furious fire than that to which the centre of this line was exposed. General von Brandenstein, commanding the 3rd Brigade of the Landwehr, was shot down as he rode close to me, and several of his Staff were wounded. At length the entrenchments were reached, behind which were lying the shattered remnants of the 59th and 58th Landwehr. The fraternization consisted in the cry of "Hurrah Preussen!" and then "Vorwärts—immer vorwärts!" and the line threw itself to its front in a run. The gunners from the battery, brave men and stubborn, had barely time to run round the corner before the Landwehr were upon them. The guns they left perforce. In the villages the French made a last stand, but it had been better for them that they had run away at first. The Landwehr, with less of the conventional warrior in them than the line, are not so much inclined to give quarter as are the professional soldiers. With many a Frenchman this afternoon the shrift consisted of a bayonet thrust. They fought like devils in the narrow ways of the villages, and used the mitrailleuses with rare judgment and effect. But then there came the steady inexorable stride forward of the Landwehr,

the bayonet gained force from that huge thigh and back power which is the leading characteristic in an athletic sense of the Prussian physique, and the villages were cleared of all save victors, dead, and wounded.

Retonfay, October 8, 2 A.M.—It is the fate of a correspondent in such times as these never to get a chance to do himself credit, or to do justice to the public who read the journal which he represents. Thus, while doing my poor best to describe the engagement in front of Maizières, which from first to last I had witnessed, *tempus inexorabile* intervened, and I had to conclude without recounting not a few episodes which well deserved to be commemorated. Since I finished that letter at 8 P.M. I have ridden twenty miles. My route was to the railway station at Courcelles, and thence back to this place, my old quarters. In the present letter I would ask permission to pick up a few of the threads which time compelled me to leave hanging loose in my letter of last evening. To the Landwehr must be conceded the honour of the fray. They it was who checked the rush of the French advance, by holding the villages till they had not a man that could stand upright and fire the needle-gun. To them also was entrusted the grand final advance which swept the French out of the villages. I have seen the Prussian line soldiers fight before to-day. I saw them clamber up the face of the Speichern on their hands and knees; I saw them deploy in front of Colombey and Montoy in the battle of the 14th of August; I saw them stand up against the mitrailleuses on the slopes of Gravelotte; and I saw them dash the Frenchmen back inside Sedan on the 1st of September. I have learned to believe that the Prussian line men can do aught that any soldiers in the world can do. But it was not till yesterday that I gauged the capacity of the Landwehr. Were I a general, I should never wish to command better men. Cool in the entrenchments, when they lay calmly in position, picking up the bullets that fell among them—resolute, indomitable, in their steady quick march forward, and then irresistible in the final bayonet rush with which they carried the villages—they are troops to delight the heart of a man with a soldierly instinct. Nothing was more observable than the cool manner in which the wounded went to the rear in the general advance—every man depending on himself if he could walk at all, declining the services of assistants to help him out of the fray. Nor were they slight wounds with which these gallant fellows struggled unaided to the rear. One, for instance, to whom I spoke, was shot right through the lungs, and at every step his breath came panting through the bullet-hole. It might be that he struggled on till he

reached the straw in the courtyard of the Château of Amelange, where the doctors were toiling up to their elbows in blood; but I fear his was one of the many bodies that chequered the green fields behind the advance. Gallant fellows as they are, it goes to one's heart to see the Landwehr fight and die. Not like a linesman can they take their life in their hand and go down into the fray conscious that nobody will hunger because they fall. For every second Landwehr man that fell yesterday there is a widow in the Fatherland now, and, with children of my own around my hearth, my heart swells to think of the number of unconscious orphans made yesterday in the pleasant villages and the quiet plains of Deutschland. Pray God that, fight who may, there may be no more deadly battles in which the Landwehr shall have to take part. Not that, as it seemed to me, they dwelt upon the thought of *frau* and *kinder*. The hairy *kerl*, with the grey in his beard—and who knows how many young birds in his nest?—went straight to the front as boldly as the sprightly young volunteer who had only a girl to weep for him if he should fall. But they are a prayerful people these Germans, and I fancied, when the word “Vorwärts” came sounding through the ranks, that many a man bent his head for a moment into his hand, as if he were entering a church. And referring to religion, who was this, think you, that came running to the front with white hair and black skirts flying behind him on the wind? The divisional chaplain, good clerics of England—a big bottle in one hand and a prayer-book in the other. The bottle contained a cordial; no man needs to be told what kind of cordial the prayer-book contained. I wish you could afford space for a translation of all the prayers in this little war gospel. The army chaplains have compiled a variety of short and simple prayers for the troops in various circumstances. There is one for men on the *feldwache*; another, pure and pathetic in its beautiful simplicity, for the *verwundete*. And no doubt Herr Pastor, as he went to the front amid the hailstorm of bullets, had his finger on the page on which this prayer is printed. The good man was out of breath, and he had a smear of clay on his shoulder, for, as he gaspingly told me, his horse had been already shot under him. When I next saw him he was behind a wall in Grandes Tapes, among a group of prostrate mén, and he was lifting up his voice in prayer amidst the roar of the artillery. What an extraordinary superiority the Prussian troops have over the French when the matter comes to be decided at close quarters by a bayonet charge! The lithe supple Frenchmen recoil like so much india-rubber before the straight strong shoulder push of the Prussians. But india-

rubber recovers its elasticity and rebounds—the French never rebound. It seems to me that it is a matter of sheer weight rather than impetus. It was with impetus rather than weight that we drove the Russians back that foggy morning that ushered in the battle of Inkermann, and it was also by the fury of their impetus that the French carried the Mamelon. But the Prussians push the bayonet forward less with a rapid rush than with a measured, stately, quick step that carries everything before it as inexorably as fate. On my way to the rear, after the brunt of the fight was over, I looked into the courtyard of Amelange, where the doctors were hard at work. The men lay all round waiting for their turn, and smoking like so many lime-kilns. Here already by five o'clock there were quite two hundred wounded, and those in Amelange were but a handful compared to the gross number that had been wounded. After I had finished the letter which I sent you yesterday evening, I rode with it to Courcelles. Immediately after crossing the pontoon bridge at Argancy a *détour* became necessary. The Prussian artillery was still firing in the moonlight from the heights above Olgy, and St. Julien was sluggishly throwing projectiles on to the table-land, seemingly to silence their fire. All the ground in the rear of Charly and towards Vany was pitted with shells that had fallen and burst during the day. A brisk musketry fire was still going on in front of Chieulles and L'Orme, so quiet when I had ridden through them in the morning. The French, pouring down out of the Bois de Grimont, had made a feigned attack in considerable force up this valley, and the old women and children in Chieulles must have had their equanimity not a little disturbed. All I could hear was that in the front there were many dead and wounded, and I met a large ambulance train coming forward into the fire from out the village of Vremy. Poix had been shelled during the day, but all was now quiet there. A little farther on I came to the rear of Servigny and Noisseville, from which I met my friends of the 4th returning singing triumphantly. The French from Mey and the slope in front of St. Julien had sent three battalions into Nouilly, and thence had attempted to storm the *repli* in front of Noisseville, but had been repulsed with considerable loss, the Prussian artillery driving them out of Nouilly into the wood. I was in time to accompany a tentative advance of the Prussian artillery along the *chaussée* right under the earthworks of little Belle Croix, which was chiefly remarkable from the circumstance that St. Julien made no effort to arrest the operation.

October 7.—Yesterday two or three very heavy trains came through Remilly, towards Pont-à-Mousson, containing the siege train

from Strasburg. It has been sent forward towards Paris with all speed, taking the northern route by Laon, as the destroyed tunnels on the Marne Valley line prevent that railway from being utilized throughout its whole length. Another train also passed containing artillery from Kiel; the abandonment of the Baltic blockade on the part of the French fleet having made available the heavy guns which had defended the forts of that port. It is reported that the great Krupp cannon has gone forward to Paris. This immense piece many readers must remember as having been in the Paris Exposition of 1867. It is the only one of its calibre ever made in Prussia, and was located in one of the forts at Kiel, with a quantity of ammunition and projectiles especially made for it. If it has really gone to Paris, it ought soon to make an impression; for it is probably the most powerful piece of artillery in the world.

By special request of the troops stationed here in Retonfay there was divine service this morning in a meadow in the vicinity of the village. The division chaplain officiated, and the Brigadier-general was present with his Staff. It was a fine sight to see the four battalions, numbering as many thousand men, drawn up in a hollow square, with the clergyman and the regimental band in the centre. The service commenced with a hymn, in which all the troops joined with fervour. This was followed by the liturgy, with full choral service. Then the minister preached a kind of informal sermon. He selected no Scripture text—his text was the duty of a Christian soldier in war time. His words evidently came from the heart, and as evidently went to the heart. When he spoke of the friends at home longing for tidings from the front, and yet half afraid to hear them lest they should learn that the loved one had fallen in battle, many were the heads bent down on the manly chests, and many a gallant soldier held his hand before his eyes to hide the starting tear. It was remarkable what an effect the chaplain's words had in stimulating correspondence when the service was over. Round each *feldwebel* there was quite a little crowd eager to obtain the "correspondence carte" on which the troops mostly write their brief epistles, and the post corporal had enough to do to carry the great bag with which he went over to the field-post in Flanville. A little after the service I was sitting with the paymaster and another officer, when a knock came to the door, and there entered a great hulking fellow from Dantzic, who sheepishly asked the paymaster to accommodate him with paper money for his bullion. How much do you think he had? Why, counting pfennigs and a queer collection of kreutzers,

he could make up just one thaler, and this huge remittance the great honest manly fellow wished to send to the *frau* away on the shore of the Baltic. It was only three shillings, but it was the last stiver the man had, and he will go without his glass of beer till next pay day comes round. Fancy an English soldier coming to his officer with a handful of halfpence for conversion into paper-money! But a German regiment is one great brotherhood, and the paymaster pocketed the coppers and gave the man the paper thaler with a kindly word and look, for has he not a *frau* of his own in Königsberg, whose portrait lies against that broad chest of his? In the afternoon there were company parades, at which the officer in command of each company gave the men instructions in their duties when on *feldwache*. It was not a drill, but a kind of lecture. The men listened intently and intelligently to the lucid expositions of their officer, and that his words were not to them as the empty air was proved by the fact that after the parade was over I heard several groups of men talking over the subject-matter of the *hauptmann's* observations.

In the evening there was a camp fire, an institution not unknown at Wimbledon in the early days of the volunteer movement, when as yet the encampment was but small, and where Lord Elcho's sonorous voice could be heard over the whole gathering. During peace time, there is a camp fire—or a gathering equivalent to it—once a week in every Prussian regiment, to which the married officers bring their good ladies, and whither also the “beauty and fashion” of the garrison town are invited. “Beauty and fashion” are represented in Retonfay by a few French crones of fabulous age, who confine their remarks to muttering “*Mon Dieu!*” continuously, and who, I suspect, would gladly poison the whole regiment if they could do so without risk to themselves. But nevertheless we had our camp fire last night, and that too under quite imposing circumstances. The spot selected was a pretty meadow by the side of a stream, about two hundred yards from the village. An officer of taste, and with a capital eye for landscape gardening, devoted himself from a very early hour in the morning to perfecting the arrangements. With a fatigue party, he threw a pretty rustic bridge across the stream, and lined the path leading to it with green boughs. With these too he enclosed a large circle, with a smaller area close by for the band, and in the centre of the larger circle a great bonfire was built, its foundation raised by the earth excavated from a trench dug around it. All the chairs in the village were collected, and most of the tables, and placed in picturesque confusion around this central point.

The officers began to gather about five o'clock. They were all so smart that I felt ashamed of my old tweed shooting jacket and shockingly dilapidated wide-awake. The parade coats had been dug out of the bottom of portmanteaus, and looked quite spruce and natty. Boots had been polished to a pitch that might have stimulated the admiration of Day and Martin. Spurs and buttons glittered brightly in the setting sun. Then our worthy colonel—Oberst von Sietzen-Hennig—made his appearance, accompanied by his stanch ally the major. The colonel too was evidently on ceremony, for he wore the sword which King Wilhelm presented to him with his own hands on the evening of one of the battles of the 1866 campaign. All rose to greet the commanding officer, and immediately he was seated the band struck up. So thoroughly was the affair managed, that an elaborately written programme of the music was laid on the colonel's table, of which I took a copy. It may interest English readers to know what music a Prussian regimental band played, while the bass accompaniment was furnished by the roar of the guns over against us on the other side of the Moselle. Here is a copy of the programme:—

Fest Overture	<i>Fischer.</i>
An der schönen blauen Donau Walzer	<i>Strauss.</i>
La Belle Amazone	<i>Loischhorn.</i>
March Potpourri	<i>Bach.</i>
Künstler Fest Quadrille	<i>Hermann.</i>
Fanfare Militaire	<i>Ascher.</i>

It was a very pretty sight. About forty officers were present, grouped picturesquely around the tables. Military servants circulated everywhere, serving the company with glasses of beer. The outside of the bough-enclosed circle was lined with the men of the various battalions, who crowded to the spot, under the attraction of the music. More hearty good fellowship could not be imagined. The colonel and the youngster who won his silver shoulder-straps but yesterday were on the most equal footing. In an interval of the music a young officer came into the circle who had just returned from the hospital at Dusseldorf, whither a bullet through the foot in the battle of the 31st August had sent him. Then he had been only a *feldwebel*, but he had got his lieutenancy when lying on his back, and this was his first appearance among his comrades since his promotion. As he came forward the colonel rose and called for a bumper to the health of his gallant young friend. The young fellow bowed and blushed as all obeyed the chief's order, following the draught with a cheer that must have been heard at St. Julien. Then the colonel was good enough to

disarrange the programme for the introduction of "Rule Britannia," as a special token of consideration for your correspondent. By this time the darkness had begun to fall, and the bonfire was formally set alight, the circle breaking up from the tables, and re-forming around its cheerful blaze. The band exhausted the programme, and took to playing song tunes, the officers chiming in lustily with their voices, and the men on the outskirts taking up the chorus. The scene was one in which a painter would have delighted—the bright wood fire lighting up the faces of the circle around it, and ever and anon, as it shot up more brightly, dissipating the thick darkness beyond, and flashing on the faces of the men through the boughs. But no painter could give effect to what was to me the most weird phase of the affair—the measured thud of the cannonading sounding between every pause in the music or lull in the din of the conversation; and it was strange, too, to reflect that, as we sat here cheerily, we were still within the range of the great guns of St. Julien. I could not help thinking of the effect which a 42-lb. shell would have had if it had fallen and exploded right in the heart of the bonfire. The good fellows of the 4th, however, troubled themselves with no such speculations. It was sufficient for them that St. Julien was quiet, and that the fire was cheery, the company good, and the beer reasonably plentiful and palatable. In the course of the evening one of the captains gave a toast, which was received with intense enthusiasm—the health of the gallant comrades who had won the decoration of the Iron Cross. It was on the breast of at least half those who sat round the fire. When the cheering had subsided the band struck up the "Paris" march—a *souvenir* of 1813, in remembrance of which campaign the Iron Cross was first instituted. About half-past eight the colonel gave the toast of "Our Comrades of the Artillery," in honour of some gentlemen of that service who were present, and then, after the band had played "God Save the King," said good night, and went away to his supper. I followed him in a very short time, but when I came outside to smoke my cigar in the moonlight, before turning into the straw, I could still hear the merry chorus down in the meadow by the camp-fire. It was then about eleven o'clock, and how long after the last of the roisterers may have kept it up I have no the slightest idea.

Retonfay, October 9.—The storm around Metz has subsided, and we are once more in what is here reckoned perfect quietude although one unaccustomed to the playful ways of Forts St Julien and Les Bottes might not unnaturally feel surprise and uneasiness as he watched the flashes from their grim sides and

the rate of about one in every five minutes. I have noticed that this fire was always strongest after the hour at which dinner is usually partaken of, and I venture alternate hypotheses to account for the circumstance. It may be that the French gunners, after their scanty meal of horseflesh without salt, get savage, and work off their wrath by discharging their big guns in a wild and promiscuous fashion, just as a Highland laird, when he loses his temper, swears miscellaneously at the whole countryside. Or it may be that, in the absence of solid food, the champagne, which the commandants of the forts presumably consume for dinner, gets into their heads, and prompts them to give orders for the immediate annihilation of the besieging army by a few brisk salvoes from their heavy artillery. Wine, I have reason to believe, is still plentiful in Metz, and wine will reconcile French troops to many hardships.

I telegraphed yesterday morning concerning what seemed then a very threatening aspect of affairs, but the cloud, in a figurative sense, died away, while in a material sense it accumulated and then burst. About midday a furious storm of rain fell, and apparently drowned out the courage of the French. Previous to that hour St. Julien and Les Bottes had thrown in all about 100 grenades in among the ruins of the Brasserie and among the fragments of the village of Noisseville. But, as it happened, the Prussian brigade stood just behind both places, and the men had, therefore, an eligible opportunity of acquainting themselves in perfect safety with the potency of a shell-fire from heavy artillery. The fire gradually died away to the south, and about two o'clock the order came for the reserves and artillery to return to their several quarters, and for the outposts to be reinstated in their original positions. Since then there has been no new alarm. It is not difficult, I think, to form a tolerably correct opinion as to the plan of Bazaine's tactics of yesterday. At the lowest estimate he must have 65,000 troops, which, so far as the defence of Metz is concerned, are superfluous, and therefore detrimental. This element is the lever which the Prussians are using for the reduction of the fortress. They are ploughing their enemy's ground with their enemy's heifer. A hundred thousand men will sooner consume a given quantity of provisions than will twenty thousand; and when the larger number reach starvation point, the surrender of everything—field troops, garrison, fortress, and town—must occur. But for their appreciation of this eventuality, nothing would please the Prussians better than to open a fair passage to Bazaine any hour in the twenty-four. He might come outside the cordon and welcome with 60,000 men, and in the course of the following day, when he was holding a

council of war, and debating, *more Gallico*, whether to march on Sedan or strike southward and cut the Prussian communications, a hundred thousand Prussians would fall upon him from all points of the compass and smite him hip and thigh. But if his army were chopped into fragments to-morrow, the fortress of Metz, with its garrison left inside, would still confront the besiegers, and its reduction would be postponed in proportion to the procrastination of the starvation point effected by the fewer mouths to feed. Of all this Bazaine, a capable man, whose energy and merits the Prussians acknowledge frankly, cannot fail to be aware. He objects to capitulation *simpliciter* in the fortress, or to the alternative of capitulation or annihilation in the open field. But there lies the Moselle, beckoning him on to the half-way house of Thionville, and beyond Thionville, at the distance of a single forced march, lies the frontier. Oh! if he could only dash out through that vexatious cordon. Across the beautiful plain lie the divisions of the Landwehr. A regular soldier himself, Bazaine has probably learned to despise the Garde Mobile with all the contempt of a veteran used to command veteran troops; and nothing is more natural than for a Frenchman to reason from a false analogy that as the Garde Mobile so are the Landwehr. To-day he has to digest his misconception as best he may. But the conception of Bazaine's effort was creditable to his knowledge of the military art. While he made his grand effort against the Landwehr in the valley, he did his best to keep the other sections of the environing circle from finding leisure to concentrate in support of the Landwehr. The attack on Vany, L'Orme, and Chieulles was well calculated to engross the 10th Army Corps; that from Mey on Noisseville and Servigny might well perform the same office with regard to the 1st Army Corps; the 7th Army Corps might be supposed to have their hands pretty well full with the sortie against Peltre, Mercy-le-Haut, and Ars-Laquenexy, and with luck this sortie, too, might get through as far as the depôt at Courcelles, and bring back of its abundance to the Gardes Nationaux who were plying the big guns on the ramparts, and to the hungry citizens. The well-conceived feint against Ladonchamps was intended to keep the 3rd Army Corps in play, occupying as it does the slopes between the valley and the fort of Plappeville. And then—there was but the Landwehr to cope with, and surely 40,000 veteran French troops might crash through the lines of these citizen soldiers, weakened as those lines were by elongation across the whole plateau. Then, hey for Thionville! only ten miles off, where a secure lair might be had under the guns of that fortress while the columns caught their wind; and then,

picking up by the way what superfluous troops there might be in its garrison, one long march to the frontier, and there was gained a surrender to the Belgian troops instead of to the detested Prussians. This I take to have been Bazaine's programme. Had it succeeded, Metz would have been a tougher nut for the Prussians to crack than ever; their policy of starvation would have been seriously compromised, while Bazaine's field army would only have anticipated the inevitable capitulation.

The two grand blunders which defeated the scheme were the misconception on Bazaine's part of the strength, prowess, and effective dispositions of the Landwehr, and the mistaken idea that his feints to the right and left would so engross the 10th and 3rd Army Corps as to prevent them from aiding the Landwehr to give him check on the plateau. His error on the former point must have come home to him when he saw his regulars recoiling pell-mell from the bayonet points of the Landwehr men in the villages; the salvoes of artillery sent by the 10th Army Corps from Malroy, Olgy, and other heights on the east side of the Moselle, and by the 3rd Army Corps from Frenecourt, Sennecourt, and the heights above St. Rémy, all coigns of vantage on the bluffs on the western fringe of the valley, must have made him comprehend that a feigned attack, even if considerable, was not capable of engrossing the full attention of a Prussian Army Corps. The batteries on the positions I have named enfiladed him ruinously. Down the valley there tore a fierce direct fire from the batteries at Amelange and those in front of Brioux, which advanced by alternate batteries with as much coolness and precision as I have seen exhibited by the troops of a cavalry regiment working in Phoenix Park; while from the heights on either side came such a cross fire that I am filled with respect for the troops of Bazaine, when I realize the fact that they waited for the bayonet to dislodge them from their position. Add to Bazaine's disadvantages, that he was miserably short of field artillery, and the conclusion is obvious, that he could not but have failed under the circumstances, while the deduction is no less patent that the frustration of any future attempt is equally inevitable. Bazaine may betake himself to a careful estimate of his food stores, and then work a little sum in the rule of simple division. Let him divide the number of rations by the number of mouths he has to feed—the result will be the number of days for which he can hold out. Let him add, if he please, two days for the consumption of the available boot leather, and other two for the Quixotry of absolute starvation, if he can prevail on his men to suffer it *causa honoris*;

and he can count the hours that will intervene between the hoisting of the white flag with as much certainty as the inmate of the condemned cell can reckon the hour that Mr. Calcraft shall present himself.

The Prussians will intervene in no way to disturb a calculation made on the basis of rations and mouths. Their tactics are fixed. Their circle of environment is drawn, and will neither be widened nor curtailed. But it is highly probable that even if Bazaine should abandon as hopeless any intention of cutting through, there may be some severe fighting within the next few days. I have often had occasion to refer to the belt of "neutral" villages which lies between the Prussian and the French foreposts—a kind of "no-man's land," as to the non-disturbance of which a sort of tacit understanding has existed from the first. The Prussians have loyally maintained this understanding, out of regard to the women and children occupying the villages; the French have frequently violated it. Bazaine's dispositions of the day before yesterday were based on an all-round violation of the understanding, and the one-sided character of an arrangement adhered to only by one of the parties concerned must be obvious. I have reason to believe that it is under consideration on the part of the Prussian authorities, whether it be not imperative, in the interest of the cause in which they are engaged, and for the prevention of outbursts causing loss of life, to make a total destruction of these neutral villages, and clear the intervening space right up to the French front. This is in accordance with the recommendation of distinguished engineer officers. One of these, a man whose opinion is of immense weight, assured me, on the 7th inst., that he was prepared to recommend this course from the very outset, and that its postponement was merely mistaken lenity. "War is war," was his grim remark. From a military point of view I agree *in toto* with this distinguished tactician. I cannot but honour the generous counsels which have as yet averted the step, and which, as I think probable, would still have prevailed but for the bad faith of the French army. As I came through an abandoned village yesterday, I read an inscription which some sententious individual had written with the end of a charred stick on the front of a burnt house. "C'est la guerre!" was the dry comment on the ruin. I should have liked to have seen this blackened cottage, with its short but bitter inscription, set down on one of the Boulevards of Paris when the capital was ringing with the shouts of "A Berlin! A Berlin!" And "C'est la guerre" will be all the consolation left to the desolate ones. But, good folks in Britain, with big

hearts and heavy purses,—and I may add with snug houses and firm roof-trees,—I pray you think of these poor creatures, now housing in the doomed villages: when the warning goes forth, what will be their fate in this inclement weather, with the ground a quagmire and the country desolated for miles around! Think, wives and mothers, of the women and of the little ones that “*la guerre*” forces to quit the humble cottage homes and go forth—God alone knows whither. If anything is done for these wretched peasantry let it be done quickly, while yet it is possible to do good. At present the inhabitants of the villages occupied by the Prussians live on the frank, but necessarily casual, charity of the Prussian soldiery. In this village the venerable pastor lies stricken with an incurable disease. In his house are quartered several Prussian officers, and with one of these I paid a visit to the sick room on the night of our arrival. The dying old man—a gentleman and a scholar—showed us, with a blush on his withered face, his empty purse. Food, physic, money, or medical comforts, he had none. They have quick sympathies, these gallant lads of the Prussian army! Out came the purse, and the thalers clinked as the pastor’s empty purse grew heavier. Then there was a bolt for the regimental doctor, and in half an hour a bottle of physic was by the bed-head, and a cup of Liebig in the pastor’s hand. The old man wept as he blessed the lad, and methought there was water in the eyes of the latter as he bent his head, Protestant as he is, to receive the blessings of a Catholic. This is but one instance out of many of the generous sympathy of the Prussians; but this, warm as it is, must utterly fail to overtake the necessities of the case, if the destruction of these villages should be decided on. The true help would consist in the transportation of the women and children to a part of France not afflicted with active warfare, and their maintenance till, after the proclamation of peace, their homes should be rebuilt. The undertaking is not a stupendous one—in all, probably, there are not 400 unfortunates. There will be many less after a time, if assistance of some kind cannot be afforded.

If, however, friends in Britain should be moved to make some effort to ameliorate the condition of these wretched victims of war, it is necessary to warn whatever scheme of administration may be adopted against dilettanteism, red tape, and the truly British practice of divided responsibility. Let warning be taken by the imbecile failure of the organization of the British ambulances for affording aid to the wounded. I have not words to express my disgust and contempt for the mal-administration which makes the whole affair a laughing-stock

in this section of the theatre of war. We all know how long the war has lasted. I should have expected to see some kind of organization at the instance of the British society established around Metz, looking at the funds which a generous public has placed at the disposal of the directorate. In contradistinction to this, I am officially informed that the management in Saarbruck are engaged in the construction of a *dépôt* for the reception of their stores, since no existing building can be obtained on lease. There are empty French mills at Steering—three miles from Saarbruck, and advantageously situated on the railway—which might be had for the trouble of occupation. But then Steering is some distance from the fleshpots of Egypt in the shape of good tables *d'hôte* and spring mattresses. I take it that the edifice at Saarbruck will be roofed in and floored about the time when the war is over, and the wounded are all hobbling about in a convalescent state. I am also officially informed that an ambulance train of eight carriages was yesterday sent forward to Remilly, and that the "English Ambulance" is now prepared to fulfil requisitions made upon it from any quarter. The Remilly expedition is to wait there "for the capitulation of Metz;" and it may be of some use in aiding the sick in the hospitals of the town and fortress, provided the Staff have not consumed in the meantime all the medical comforts. But I submit that it is not sufficient for a concern like the English ambulance to take its ease in its inn, and to intimate in a slipshod way, through casual journeyers to the front, that it is in a condition to supply requisitions. This much a wholesale druggist would do, and be glad to do. Neither does it accord with what I consider the duty of a national matter like this, that its conductors in this quarter should quietly remain on the frontier, and helplessly request suggestions from men who may be on the foreposts with eyes in their heads. The route all round Metz is open for anybody who is well authenticated and well mounted, and it is the part of a judicious administrator to judge for himself, rather than to entreat suggestions from others. I think it would be neither difficult nor a matter occupying much time to organize a thoroughly efficient ambulance for the district around Metz. The two typical men in my mind for such an ambulance are, a Pickford's *dépôt* foreman and the late Mr. Bianconi, who organized the mail-car system throughout Ireland. The foreman could do all, and more than all, that the ambulance is now doing. With the facilities which the Prussian authorities cheerfully accord, he would intimate his willingness "to fulfil all requisitions that might be made upon him." He would deposit the

required materials at the doors of the several lazarettos in want of them. Then, as regards the real purpose for which an "ambulance" is intended, and whence it derives its name. Around Metz, in the third line, there are everywhere practicable roads. District depôts might easily be established, one say at Ste. Barbe, another at Olgy, a third somewhere behind Sennecourt, and a fourth at Gravelotte. To these depôts might be consigned the sick and wounded Prussians from the several regiments and brigades—the poor fellows who now make long weary journeys to Courcelles in springless country carts or on foot. Between each of these depôts there might be a continuous service of elongated Irish jaunting cars. Such vehicles are the true pattern of an ambulance. They would hold a man on either foot-rest, two more on the seats, and one above the well in the centre. Four poles at each corner, with tarpauling, would make an efficient protection from the weather. Thus, by easy stages, and resting at intervals in the depôts, might the sick and wounded be brought down in ease and comfort to Courcelles, whence the trains are ready to convey them to Prussia. These hospital trains are the most complete things of the kind I have ever seen. The carriages are built on the American model, with an entrance at either end. There are two tiers of beds down each side, three in each tier, and the beds have every appliance calculated to give comfort to the occupants. One carriage devoted to the purposes of a laboratory, another forms a living and sleeping room for the volunteer attendants, and a third is a kitchen. I have written about the English ambulance from a vivid remembrance of Balaclava. That port, with its organization for provisioning and medical purposes, got into a decent state of method and system about ten days before the order came for the embarkation of the troops which had reduced Sebastopol. I think it probable that the same tardy results will characterize our organization in the present instance, unless some one with energy, knowledge of what is really wanted, or contempt for the Circumlocution Office, and no special craving for the fleshpots of Egypt, has entrusted to him the control of affairs. At Courcelles there is a German depôt under Baron Kramm, which is really working tooth and nail under difficulties that an English ambulance would not have to encounter. The Baron himself is one of the most energetic men I have met, and works day and night with the supremest contempt for the good things of this life. The terribly wet weather which we have had for the last thirty-six hours has already begun to tell a tale on the health of the Prussian troops. Waggon-load after waggon-load of sick

men go down to Courcelles. Diarrhœa and bronchitis are the chief complaints. There are many more men arriving well than departing sick, and good things for the troops pour in apace. We had yesterday a large consignment of red wine, seltzer-water, under-clothing, and cigars, and it pleased me not a little to see the hospital orderlies administering to the wounded men in Amelange soda-water, on the bottles containing which was the name of an English firm. The knitted woollen abdominal belts which have been sent down from the Fatherland are most valuable things for the prevention of ill-health in this weather, when the rain is coming down in a deluge, and the whole country is like thin putty. A heavy pelt of hail fell yesterday.

The Oberst has just called upon us, bringing me a letter, and also the semi-official information that three French eagles and two French battalions were captured at the battle of Maizières the day before yesterday. I have just seen a statement in a German paper, quoted from Brussels, to the effect that an open letter has been found in a "post balloon" from Metz, stating that Lebœuf and Bazaine have wounded each other in a duel, and that Canrobert is now in command. I do not impugn the veracity of the statement that such information may have been contained in an open letter found in a balloon—it may be true, or a Belgian invention; I have no means of judging. But I can inform you of this fact—which I have learnt personally from French prisoners of the day before yesterday—that Bazaine himself conducted the operations of that day, and that he was in the immediate front of St. Eloy when the combined attacks were made on Ladonchamps and Grandes and Petites Tapes.

October 11.—A French deserter from the army of Metz was brought here this morning, as I have already informed you by telegram. He belonged to the 59th of the Line, and to the Army Corps of which Marshal Lebœuf has the command. His regiment, along with two others, is lying on the slope on which stands the village of Vauloux, a little behind Mey. He told us that his desertion was a matter of arrangement with a large body of the soldiery. Lots had been drawn who should make the first attempt, and if the experiment succeeded, the others were to desert likewise. He dodged along the verge of the Bois de Grimont, and then came sneaking through the weinbergs till he reached the Prussian *feldwache* behind Nouilly. I am told that many Frenchmen were observed watching his career. The man is an Alsatian, as are most of the men of his regiment, and he speaks German well. He says the men around Metz are tired of their lives. Nominally, the force to

which he belonged lives under canvas, but the stench in the tents is so strong, by reason of cutaneous diseases among the men, that almost all sleep in the open air. This for the last two days has been tantamount to sleeping in a water-butt. The skin disease is chiefly of a scorbutic character, caused by the want of vegetables, the absence of salt, and the almost exclusive living on horseflesh. The poor fellow's mouth and face were in a very bad state from scurvy. He says most of his fellows are similarly affected. The spirit of disaffection is almost universal; even the Guards are tainted with it. Since the defeat of the 7th they positively refuse to make any more sorties, and it is with difficulty that the officers can prevail on the men to go upon out-post duty. The service is very severe. Bazaine is a strict disciplinarian, and insists on his troops lying continually in immediate readiness for action. Of bread the deserter says there is considerable scarcity, and the quality is bad; the quantity of rice served out is a tea-cupful per day between two men. This with the bread is all the food besides horseflesh the men have. They have eaten the horses of several cavalry regiments, and are now masticating battery horses. Bazaine has caused great grumbling in the town of Metz by impressing into the service either as soldiers or sick carriers all the able-bodied citizens, no matter of what age; and by this expedient, notwithstanding the many sick, he contrives to keep the number of troops under arms up to the nominal number of 100,000.

Retonfay, October 13.—A beat-up of the enemy's quarters about Borny and Grigy took place yesterday. By twelve o'clock the troops here, previously on the alert, were called forward into the rear of the first line. Everything went with them—luggage, horses, *marketenders*. Even the two battalion dogs, objecting to be out of the *mêlée*, went to the front like their masters. Unfortunately, owing to a slight and temporary lameness, I was unable to follow; and there I was left alone on a truss of straw in the corner of a dilapidated room, when, for aught I could tell, something really worth seeing was going on within a short mile of where I lay. Inaction is bad enough when you see others moving about around you, setting forth for cheery calls on comrades, starting for adventurous rides along the foreposts, or returning with narratives of what they had seen, and which to see also you would have given anything in reason. But solitary inaction is ever so much worse, especially when you can hear the crash of the artillery and the shriller music of the small arms within an aggravatingly short distance. We have all read of instances where the invitations such sounds afforded have summoned men even

from their death-beds to partake in the stirring doings. Of one notable example I myself am cognizant. The night before the battle of Balaclava one of the butchers of a light cavalry regiment got desperately drunk, and was handed over to the custody of the guard. In the morning began the memorable battle. "Butcher Jack," awakened from his drunken slumber by the din of the cannon, longed with the true spirit of a soldier to be among his fellows. The guard had strolled away to the crest of the knoll to look down upon the battle, and Jack, sallying out and making a *détour*, succeeding in catching and mounting a stray Russian charger just in time for the Light Cavalry charge into the Valley of Death. Into that valley the man rode without a coat, his shirt sleeves rolled up, and his hands and arms stained with the relics of the yesterday's butchering work. What is more, he came out safe, with a wounded comrade across the pommel of his saddle; and till "Butcher Jack" drank himself to death in the purlieus of Cork, he wore on his breast the medal for "distinguished conduct in the field." But this—in the words of somebody whose name I do not at the moment remember—this is a digression. The doctor's orders were peremptory that I should remain on the straw, and there I lay and chafed. Imagine the feelings of a lover who lies with a broken leg in the parlour, listening to a rival kissing his sweetheart in the passage. Imagine the feelings of a young lady kept at home from a ball by the non-arrival of a dress, when her sisters have gone away in the fly, and when she listens to the waltz-music and the footfall of the dancers in the semi-detached villa over the way. If you can imagine the concentrated quintessence of all these bitter feelings, you may be able to realize something of my torture as I lay on the straw. At last I could bear it no longer. I called Bach. Bach is a curiosity. Bach is my servant. I picked him up here. He was a kind of nondescript civil servant, having a precarious connection with the officers of the 6th company of the 4th Regiment. I originally noticed him because I happened to observe him cleaning a pair of boots on the *repli* in front of Noisseville, and whistling melodiously while the Chassepôt bullets were singing about his head. When the order came out that civil servants belonging to the officers before Metz should be sent home, I annexed Bach, and have found him a remarkably useful fellow. It is true he is not much to look at. Like Mr. Bright's terrier dog, it would puzzle a stranger to find out which is head or tail in Bach. He wears a pair of Prussian military trousers. On his trunk is a shooting jacket I have given him covered with a sheepskin coat with the wool outwards, like the garment

worn by the drosky drivers of St. Petersburg. The edifice is crowned by the cap of a French line-officer looted in the fight before Noisseville on the 1st September. Bach's genealogy would puzzle Mr. Darwin or any other elucidator of the origin of species. I am lost in doubt whether he is a Russ, a Pole, a Dantziger, or a Dane. He seems to speak with indifference all the languages of the north of Europe, and is rapidly learning English under my tuition. Of Bach I demanded to know whether there was a wheel-barrow in the place. Bach would go and see. He returned in about ten minutes with the tidings that he had found a wheelbarrow, but that it had no wheel. "But," continued Bach, "I am strong, mein Herr; mount you on my back, and I will carry you to the front." The proposition was tempting, and Bach was unquestionably strong. I got off the straw and on to his back, and off we set. How the honest soldiers laughed as we passed them, as they lined the *chaussée* on the road to the Brasserie. They asked me whether I was an Uhlan, where were my spurs, and a dozen other chaffing questions. When at length we reached the Brasserie, the Hauptmann in command there, with a grim smile, stated that the post was too exposed for "cavalry" to find cover there, and that I must "ride" more to the left, into the "Tambour," a considerable earthwork fortification on the slope of the valley between the Brasserie and Montoy. Into the Tambour accordingly Bach carried me, and laid me down in the rear of a bank of earth thrown up in front of a temporary barrack.

After all, the affair came to but very little. Two batteries of 12-pounders took up position before the front line about half-way between Colombey and Montoy, and threw shells into the French camp around Grigy and Borny. The infantry were in readiness to attack, and the fore-posts were actually posted forward some distance, and were the authors of the sharp fire which I had heard, but the French gave way and dodged under cover out of reach of the shells. But that everything was thoroughly wetted by the heavy rain, Borny would probably have been fired by the Prussian shells; as it was, no tangible result was obtained by the little operation. A few men were wounded on our side on the foreposts. A couple of hours after, the infantry fire at Montoy had wholly ceased, and when the artillery were firing sleepily and at long intervals, the French woke up directly opposite us—seemingly in retaliation. St. Julien broke into a profuse shell-fire directed against Servigny, the Brasserie, and the Tambour in which I lay. Six shells burst in the already shattered Brasserie, and two in the wreck of the house on the other side of the road, while several dropped in the immediate vicinity. Two or three likewise

tumbled into the Tambour, but did no harm, although it was rather trying to one's nerves to listen to shells bursting, so to speak, in one's ear. About two o'clock half a French battalion staggered forward out of Mey, and on to the slope of the vine-berg below Noisseville. It was inexplicable what could have been the object of the demonstration, so hopeless both from its weakness and its want of spirit. I did not see the advance myself, but eye-witnesses inform me that it was headed by an exceptional number of officers, who continually encouraged forward their unwilling men. Some of the officers actually carried Chassepôts. The Prussian foreposts did not think it worth while to fall back on their supports. They waited patiently till the French had come within about 300 yards and fired a wild and straggling volley. Then from their entrenchments the Prussians poured in a withering fire, and the French melted away like water. The Prussian loss is two men killed and three wounded in this affair. I have no means of ascertaining that of the French.

The following letter, dated October 19, is from Corny, the head-quarters of Prince Frederick Charles, the "Red Prince:"—

Reaching Remilly at an early hour yesterday morning, I found five fourgons belonging to the English Ambulance Company about to start for this place, and I had the opportunity afforded me of a seat in one of the carriages. Our journey hither lay behind the foreposts, through a chain of villages in the rear of the great bulk of the Prussian regiments in the south of Metz. As we passed Pontoy we emerged on the upland plateau lying to the south of Forts Queleu and St. Privat, and before us, to the north, lay these sulky-looking fortresses, which refused to be enlightened even by the rays of the afternoon sun which fell full on their sullen sides. St. Privat was speaking with its great guns, firing in the direction of the Moselle, but close to us lay a Prussian field-battery in utter quiescence—sure token that nothing of importance was going on. At dusk we reached Corny, and applied to the Etappen Commandant for quarters. His answer was an imperative suggestion of the same character as that which the Gardes Mobiles made to Mr. Malet, on the way from Paris to Meaux with the communication to Count Bismarck which resulted in the abortive visit of Jules Favre. We had no resource but to sleep under the beautiful stars. They were, fortunately, in our case visible, and we bivouacked not uncomfortably in an orchard outside the town, which was greatly preferable to finding harbour in any of the houses of Corny, infected as they are to the very ceiling with malignant

typhus. A visit for purposes of information to the fine old château occupied by Prince Frederick Charles, resulted in my being told that the parlementaire who came out the other day had returned into Metz without any definite result, and that it was believed that Metz would now hold out to the bitter end. Further, that there was to be no change in the Prussian tactics. Still "masterly inactivity" was to be the policy, and the intelligence received from Metz, of a trustworthy character, was of a nature to indicate that this policy could not possibly, ere long, fail to effect the desired results.

Prince Frederick Charles, who has been suffering seriously from dysentery, is still far from fully recovered, but he is able to sit his horse, and he has never devolved his functions of commander-in-chief on any substitute. The Prince is not particularly desirous of the presence of any correspondents. To one possessed, as I am, of the royal permission, no positive discourtesy is manifested; on the contrary, a civil attention, although of a very distant character, is displayed; but no secret is made of the fact that my absence would be more agreeable than my presence. It is not the first time that I have experienced this anti-correspondent idiosyncrasy of Prince Frederick Charles. On the night before the battle of Vionville, I was lodged by his orders in the agreeable society of some two dozen highly odoriferous French prisoners. At that time I was not in possession of the head-quarters pass; but I recognized last night my quondam friend, the major of the gendarmes, who turned the key on me in the middle of August. He gave me last night a very blunt hint that he would not be sorry if the duty fell to his province of escorting me out of Corny into the vague regions of space, and I have no doubt he would have acted upon his feeling, had it not been for the moral influence of General Podbielski's signature.

We start this morning for Gravelotte, taking the route by Gorze, and shall work by the northward athwart the valley of the Moselle, in the line of Marange and Maizières, and so back to my old advantageous quarters under Fort St. Julien. At Gravelotte, I understand, as I think I have mentioned previously, there are a couple of batteries of 24-pounders; but these cannot be used for serious offensive purposes. They are only useful as holding the key to the grand *chaussée* which leads from Metz to Verdun, the road for the possession of which the battle of Vionville was fought.

Hitherto during this campaign the sight of Prussian cavalry has always been hailed by me with delight. With few exceptions all the Prussian officers are gentlemen, but there is a

genial heartiness about the cavalry officers which is very pleasant, and which seems peculiar to themselves. I have never till yesterday found any exception to this rule, and it is in some degree a personal disappointment and humiliation to one who has himself worn a cavalry sword to have to mention a flagrant exception. Yesterday the ambulance with which I was travelling halted just outside the village of Pommerieux at a way-side cottage, with a view to dinner. We wanted nothing but a table inside a room. The soldiers and *feldwebels* (of the 5th Uhlan Regiment) who were quartered in the house warmly responded in the affirmative to our question whether we might enter and take out our provender, and we were engaged in dining when we suddenly became aware of the advent of an officer. Without deigning the most chary courtesy, he summarily ordered us out of the place. In vain it was represented to him that we would go as soon as our meal was finished; with a clash of his sword on the ground he vociferated that we must turn out at once. The soldiers and the *feldwebels* stood looking on with countenances that seemed to apologize for the discourtesy of their superior, but he was relentless. Of course, finding so marked an absence of gentlemanly instinct, we ceased to press the matter, and packed up and turned out with all speed, the officer standing lowering at us meanwhile till we had finally shaken off our feet the dust, or rather the mud, of the place which his discourtesy rendered so inhospitable. To a correspondent like myself such discourtesy, although rare, would have been accepted, so to speak, as part of the day's work, and would not have demanded notice from my pen; but to gentlemen engaged in bringing medical stores and comforts for the sick and wounded of the Prussian army it was so unique, and so positively barbarous, as to excite surprise and sorrow.

Corny lies in a trough on the edge of the Moselle, shut out from even a distant view of Metz by two curious conical hills, which are part of the series of which the hill of Mousson and the range of St. Quentin and Plappeville are also summits. The peak nearest the river and also nearest Metz is known as the Mont St. Blaise. Its elevation is considerable, and its position renders it highly eligible as a look-out station. It would not be Prussian-like if this coign of vantage had not been taken advantage of. On its summit there is an observatory, and this observatory I visited this morning, notwithstanding the black looks of those in authority in Corny. As I rode up the mount I found it to consist of a curious crumbling mica, which had crumbled in places into small loose stones. The whole summit is honeycombed with artificial caves, formed, I suppose, in the old days, when the ruin on the summit was a castle inhabited

by some magnate of Lorraine, who from his eyrie here dominated the beautiful plain before him and the valley of the Moselle. Alongside of this ruin, and at an equal elevation, stands a lonely farm-house, and in front of it the Prussians have erected a wooden look-out post, open toward Metz, and mounted with a very powerful telescope. Not a man can move within the scope of vision that the action is not noted by the officer who constantly sits with his eye at this instrument. A series of telegraph wires from the several head-quarters of the different army corps converge into a little office in the rear of this look-out post, and the intentions of the French are thus known as soon as they proceed to manifest them by action. The post is occupied by two officers belonging to the 2nd Army Corps—one an officer of infantry, another of engineers; and they have at their disposal a detachment of soldiers to act as orderlies, messengers, &c. What a glorious view opens out before one as he stands on the little plateau in front of the ruin of the Castle of St. Blaise, and looks Metz-ward! Shade of Achilles! what a plain for a battle according to the old ding-dong style, when our forefathers went at it in fair fight, disdaining advantages of position, and eager only that the best man should win! On the left lies the narrow valley of the Moselle, with the slope of the vine-bergs in front of Gorze rising beyond. At our feet, to the left, lies Ars-sur-Moselle, skirted by the railway, with the old Roman aqueduct spanning the Moselle with its antique arches, and the new road-bridge nearer Montigny, where is the junction of the railway lines from Nancy and from Saarbruck. A locomotive was dodging about the junction as I looked down upon it, and right before me stretched the rich and beautiful plain, variegated with green and brown and yellow, according to the tint of the crops and the foliage, and with the great twin-tower of the Cathedral of Metz standing up defiantly in its centre. The river wound through the flat in three great stretches: one close under the frowning bulk of Mont St. Quentin, that sulked blackly across at us on the left front; the others twisting in a long half-loop far away to the right. As it seemed immediately under us, Fort St. Privat peeped spitefully out over the poplars surrounding the pretty village and château of Frescati, and further to my right the grim earth-work front of Fort Queleu showed itself over the plain like a huge beaver-dam. The prospect was vast. Carrying the eye over the spires of the cathedral, I could see to the north of Metz the long link of the Moselle trending eastward toward Olgy and Malroy, and with the powerful telescope in position I could even discern Fort St. Eloy, and beyond it the blackened ruins of St. Rémy, Ladon-

champs, and Grandes and Petites Tapes, where on the 7th I had seen the Landwehr die rather than yield the post they held, although bidden thereto by an overwhelming number of enemies. And now I will simply transcribe the notes I made of the several positions of the French and Prussians on the south and west of Metz, as I made them out by my own observations through the great telescope, supplemented by the information so courteously and frankly afforded by the engineer officer who was on duty at the look-out.

To begin at the now well-known Mercy-le-Haut. Opposite this point the French are in force in front of Grigy, from which position they last night burnt the remaining houses of Peltre. Working westward, the French foreposts are in Bevoie, Magny, in front of Montigny, and thence across the Moselle, at Moulins-les-Metz, which was burnt about a fortnight ago. From Moulins the forepost line runs up toward St. Hubert, between St. Ruffine and Chazelles, hence in front of Sey through the valley close under Mont St. Quentin to Sessy, and thence northward, with a slight sweep round by Plappeville, to Devant-les-Ponts, and thence to Vigneulles and Woippy. With the completion of the circle, the readers of the *Daily News* who have perused my previous letters must be well acquainted. Fair play demands that, having detailed the French forepost line, I should be equally precise (as I am fortunately able to be) with regard to the Prussian foreposts, which confront them. Beginning then in the same latitude and longitude as I did as regards the former, the Prussian foreposts stand at Peltre, and thence westward in front of St. Thiebault, and in La Papeterie (opposite Magny). Then there is a sweep comparatively close to Metz, as the Moselle is neared, and the Prussian foreposts stand impudently at Frescati, whence the sentries must be able almost to discern the complexions of the gunners in St. Privat. The line crosses the Moselle to Vaux, considerably in front of Ars-sur-Moselle, and then makes a dart forward to Jussy, right under the guns of St. Quentin. Longeau, where there is a battery of 12-pounders, which blazes into Sey and Chazelles, right under the nose of St. Quentin, continues the chain to Chatel St. Germain, a place which I visited on the 19th of August, the day after Gravelotte, when the dead lay in heaps in the little village, and where already General von Göben had thrown up entrenchments to cover his foreposts from the shells of St. Quentin. Across the plateau and the wood of Chatel St. Germain run the links of the strong forepost chain, giving a wide berth to the big guns of Plappeville, behind Lorry to Vigneulles, from Vigneulles to Saulny, from Saulny, still farther north-east, to Villers le

Plesnois, and so by Norroy to the blood-stained Ladonchamps, and the villages whose names are known in connection with the combat of the 7th inst., to the Moselle at Maxe.

So much for the positions of the two hostile armies in this portion of the investment. A few words now as to the position of the French inside their outposts, yet outside the town of Metz, the gates of which are sealed to Bazaine's army as rigorously as is the road to liberty. The French have in all, in the environed space and outside Metz, four great lagers or camps. The first and probably the largest is on the slope of Mont St. Quentin, looking toward Mont St. Blaise. I could see the rows of tents athwart and athwart the slope, past the village of Sey, and stretching almost down to Chazelles. Another great camp begins at Longeville, a village on the west bank of the Moselle, in a line between St. Quentin and Metz, and this lager straggles up the river margin first to St. Martin, where Bazaine has his head-quarters, and so on to the north as far as Devants-les-Ponts. A third great camp is in front of St. Julien, toward Vantoux, Vallieres, &c., concerning which I have already been able to give your readers detailed information. The fourth camp is, as I have already described it, around Borny and Grigy. Besides these camps of soldiers there are two great collections of sick, which I could discern with great ease through the telescope of the observatory. One of these is placed on the esplanade not far from the Cathedral in Metz, and along the river brink. I saw the sick being carried about on stretchers, and the curtains of the tents looped up to give air to the inmates. Another great sick camp is on the Island of Sauley, the whole of which seems devoted to the purpose, and I learn that efforts are made to isolate the place as much as possible. It is one huge block of typhus fever. Here the fell epidemic is housed, or rather tented, and I could see the sentries stationed on the bridges, and bidding stand all and sundry. Lebœuf's head-quarters, I should mention, are at Longeville.

Prisoners brought into Corny yesterday state that a pretence of regular rations existed in Metz up till yesterday. On that day the rations were out, and there was to be henceforth nothing but horseflesh. It was, however, confidently reported in Metz that before capitulation Bazaine—who, all statements to the contrary, still retains the supreme command—was to make one last desperate effort to break through into Luxemburg. If that failed, capitulation was inevitable. The whole line is on the *qui vive* for this attack, which, between you and me and the post, I don't think will come off.

Charly, October 22.—After I had ascended the hill above Corny,

on which the Prussians have their head-quarters observatory, and as to the view from which I wrote with considerable detail the day before yesterday, our party shook off from their feet the dust of Prince Frederick Charles's ungenial head-quarters, glad to get away from the suspicious glances and the surly speeches of the *feldgendarmarie* of the Staff. Mr. Lee, who had charge of the expedition, decided on sending three of his five fourgons up the river in the direction of Pont-à-Mousson, with instructions to make the wider half circuit thus necessary as quickly as possible, and having left their stores at the various hospitals on the way, to get back to Remilly, and be in readiness for anything that might happen. He himself, with the two remaining fourgons, was to push forward through Gorze to Rezonville and Gravelotte, where we were everywhere told there were many sick and wounded, while there was a great lack of medical comforts and stores. From Gravelotte Mr. Lee determined to go to the hospital at Verneville, thence to Feves, from Feves down into the valley of the Moselle, go through Maizières to the pontoon at Hautconcourt, and spend the third night of his tour in some one of the numerous villages on the east bank. This programme so exactly coincided with my own views that I was very glad to accept the courteous offer which Mr. Lee made me of a seat in his own fourgon; and during yesterday and to-day we have thus travelled in company. After quitting Corny our way lay across the river to Novéant, the means of transit being a pontoon bridge. An officer stood on the bank to regulate the traffic. He put me not a little in mind of one of our respected metropolitan policemen when engaged in a similar duty. He shouted, ran to and fro, stopped one waggon to let another go on, and his efforts culminated about every ten minutes in a dead lock, from his having halted everything in a kind of tangled maze. This amusement had spoiled his temper, and we could do nothing with him when we civilly asked him to expedite our passage. Indeed I rather incline to think that the fact of the request having been made at all told against us with this gentleman, for he kept us stationary more than once, while he called forward vehicles that were in our rear. Hour after hour passed, and we seemed as much fixtures as in the first quarter of an hour. One of our party, looking forward a little distance up-stream, came back with the intelligence that within about half a mile there was another pontoon bridge which was wholly unused, and which seemed quite practicable. Disregarding the round oaths which our friend the policeman-like officer rapped out as we temporarily created a stoppage in extricating the fourgons from the press of vehicles waiting to

cross, we drew out of the line and made all haste for the other bridge, which we crossed in triumph. Just across we came on a graveyard, which the Prussians had improvised for the bodies of those who have died in the hospitals there, whether from sickness or wounds. They bury the dead now in deal coffins, but the coffins are put in the ground with very scant ceremony. I saw a fatigue party putting a couple into a hole, the coffins lying on the grass while the men dug their receptacle.

Gorze is very much changed for the better since the last time I was in it, two days after the battle of Gravelotte. Then there was blood in the very gutters. On a billiard table in the rear of the principal hotel lay three shattered men, who had bled so profusely that, there being no orifice for the blood to flow away, they actually lay in a pool of their own blood. There was not a square yard in all the hotel unoccupied by wounded; the dead were stacked in a corner of the garden waiting for interment. Now everything was changed. From the summit of the great convent on the hill there still was flying the hospital flag; but under it lay few or no wounded men. The hotel was tenanted by the cheery officers of the Staff of Prince Louis of Hesse, who commanded the troops lying in the town, consisting of several regiments of Hessian men, with the lion instead of the eagle on their helmets. Gorze was a place where a considerable amount of irritated feeling was manifested toward the Prussians on the part of the inhabitants in the early days of the occupation. Here, as the story ran, which for the sake of human nature I am glad to know is a lie, a French girl was found hacking off the fingers of a wounded Prussian, and was taken out and hanged *flagrante delicto*. Unquestionably there was much bitterness, but it seems all to have passed away with the wounded, and with the interment of the corpses. The inhabitants have all come back to their houses, and live not merely on amicable, but seemingly on cordial terms with the stalwart Hessians billeted upon them. Madame of the hotel, who on the 20th of August moved about in a stolid apathy of despair, utterly disregarding any questions that might be put to her, and with hardly energy enough to wring her hands, was now blithe and sprightly, moving about briskly in response to the requirements of her numerous guests. The stains of blood on the floors were still visible—indelible probably while the boarding lasts; but Madame's despair was much more evanescent, and with her return to good spirits the landlady's instinct of charging high prices has returned. On the 10th of August, when I asked her whether I should pay her anything for the *quasi* shelter I had obtained for the night under her roof, she only stared blankly in my face, and I

could not get an answer from her. Now, when I asked her whether she could give me a bottle of good wine she eagerly replied in the affirmative, and placed before me a really good bottle of Muscat, on which, with a smiling face, she put the fancy price of 12 francs.

The road from Gorze to Rezonville consists, first of an ascent through a narrow gorge into a corner of the Bois de Vaux, and then it traverses the plain in a line with the close of the battle of Vionville, on the 16th of August. The wood was held strongly by the French in the morning of that day, and the Prussian 8th Army Corps had to storm up the ravine, deploy on the shoulder of the swell in front of the wood, and carry its precincts at the bayonet point. How difficult they had found this undertaking, the many graves in this vicinity too plainly showed. In the dark glades of the Bois I doubt not there still lie the corpses of the unburied dead. The foul carrion crow lazily wheeled above the tree-tops as we drove through, and I cared not to picture to myself the lonely spot where he should alight. Where the road emerges from the wood was a scene of one of the most bloody episodes of the fight. A Prussian column had come by the road we were now on, and immediately on quitting the shelter of the wood, had been subjected to the fire of a French battery from the right flank, while the French infantry stood waiting for it in front, meanwhile using their Chassepôts with terrible effect. No wonder that the Prussians went down in numbers; the wonder was that any should have survived, far less conquered, through such a terrible ordeal. Up to a lonely little house about half-way across, there were none save Prussian corpses, as there are none now save Prussian graves. At this point, however, the bull-dogs got at the throats of their enemies, and not for nothing. The French dead after this point lay as thickly as the Prussians, and there was quite a bank of slaughter. A little farther on the French were the thickest, and before one reached the outskirts of Rezonville there were but very few Prussian corpses. I am now, as must be apparent, drawing on my memory. The day before yesterday all that we saw in the way of traces of what I have been referring to were the many graves and occasional heaps of the *débris* of the battle-field. But I should not like to remain long on this field. Every grave-heap has beside it an eccentric tombstone in the shape of a barrel of chloride of lime; but notwithstanding this disinfectant the taint in the air is unmistakable and indescribably foetid. In the village of Rezonville are still some of the more severely wounded, and the doctors were heartily glad to see the stores which the English ambulance fourgons

contained. At Rezonville the troops I found were Hessians, belonging to the 7th Army Corps. After a short halt, to enable Mr. Lee to distribute his stores judiciously, we pressed on to Gravelotte, where we were most cordially received by the officers of a battery of artillery quartered there. Stabling was found for the fourgon horses, and a beautiful upper chamber was allocated to us, while we were made free of the larger room downstairs used by the officers as a mess-room. Gravelotte will never recover from the effects of the tremendous cannonade which it sustained from the artillery of both armies on the 18th of August. There is hardly a house that does not show the marks of the grenades, and all the corner houses had been pierced for musketry, while the garden walls in the environs were crenellated for the same purpose. The troops lying in Gravelotte have occupied their spare time in devoting attention to the graves of their dead comrades. Some of the monuments are quite pretentious, but all are necessarily of wood. Along with an artillery lieutenant we visited the church which on the evening of the 18th was such a horrible spectacle. Its defenders had been shot down and lay on the stone floor. Some of them had been carried out into the churchyard, but others had been shoved to one side, all round the altar, to make room for the wounded, who were brought in in numbers so great that the doctors, after working all night without intermission, saw daylight dawn on their yet only half-completed labours. Behind the church is a great mound, beneath which lie the many dead. Afterwards we were permitted to go on to the foreposts in front of Chatel St. Germain, looking over to Fort St. Julien. The chain of sentries stands just where it did on the morning of the 20th of August, looking down into the intervening valley. The French have a large cavalry forepost in the bottom of the valley. On the slope around the pretty village of Sey lay the white tents of the French camp which I had seen on the previous day from the top of Mont St. Blaise. Walking some half a mile in the direction of the Moselle, we came presently on a promontory that juts out into the valley, and commands a view of the whole country. It seemed that at our very feet lay the huge pile of the Cathedral; the tin on its spires flashing up in a watery ray of the morning sun, and the great mass casting a dark shadow across the Place d'Armes. There were no cattle visible on the green stretches of pasture-land, and comparatively few horses; but I noticed several detachments of mounted men, and horses cannot be at one and the same time under the saddle and grazing in the fields. As we walked back from the extreme foreposts we passed many rifle-pits on the crest of the rising ground forming the sentry-

line, and also a regularly constructed battery, with earthworks in front and casemates and magazine in the rear. On the platform were mounted six 12-pounders, and in the rear, near Chatel, were several batteries of field artillery. The 12-pounders look across at Fort St. Julien in the most impudent manner imaginable, as if to say, "Your fortress exists only on our sufferance; we could blow you to little pieces with a round or two if we chose, but we prefer leaving you alone, out of our tender mercy." And St. Quentin on its part seems to look across at the 12-pounders with something of a *risus sardonius* on its grim grey features.

Returning to Gravelotte, we set out for the completion of our design to make the circuit of the Prussian position. Our road lay past the blackened ruins of a farmhouse, in which, on the afternoon of the 18th of August, 200 French wounded were burnt, by shells fired from French guns. The smell in the shell, which is all that remains of a once large mansion, is horrible. The tiles have fallen in and hidden the charred corpses of the miseries who perished in the conflagration; but here and there sticks up a ghastly blackened hand, or a gartered leg swathed in discoloured red cloth! The place is one vast grave, and ought to be covered deeply with earth and quicklime as soon as possible, for the sake of the health of the troops lying within range of the taint that now emanates from it. At Malmaison, near the top of the hill, and still farther on at Verneville, the fighting on the 18th was very severe, and the memorials of it exist in plenty in the shape of the frequent graves. In a lonely upland valley stands the forlorn and ruined hamlet of Champenoise, utterly burnt out, smashed and pounded in all directions with shells, pitted all over with the dents of Chassepôt bullets, and its precincts full of mounds, below which lie, side by side, defenders and captors. Farther to the north, in the rear of Amanvilliers, is a twin battery to the one I saw at Gravelotte, very daintily constructed, and fenced round with *chevaux de frise*, and I rather think some pleasant little surprises in the shape of mines. From Amanvilliers the road trended away to the left to avoid the entrenchments in the vicinity of the foreposts at Saulny, and presently reached the village of Jerusalem. Lying in a sequestered and somewhat isolated tract, few students of war literature have as yet heard much about this tiny namesake of the great Hebrew city of antiquity. Nevertheless, it was the scene of a terrible conflict on the evening of the 18th of August. It had its Titus in the Prince Friedrich Carl, but there was no Josephus to chronicle the episodes of the fray. Yet as eloquently as any pen could have described them are they indicated now by the

silent yet expressive grave-tokens which are sown thickly all round the little spot, whose ruin is so utter that it might, to complete the parallel with its namesake of old, have been sown with salt.

Quitting the plateau lying to the north-west of Fort Plappeville, we drove through a great wood, chiefly of under-brush, and suddenly came out on a bluff overhanging the valley of the Moselle. Our point was just before Feves, and the view was glorious. Before us, in the valley, we could easily trace the line of the Prussian foreposts stretching across to the river; nearer to Metz again was the French line, and behind it the white tents of the camps, with columns of troops moving about in the interval. We could see the zigzags of Fort Moselle and of the enceinte surrounding the town. At Feves, just below us, and in a splendid position, was a battery of 12-pounders, the same that I had seen speaking to so good purpose on the afternoon of the 7th instant. Getting down into the valley, we crossed the Thionville road, and struck for the temporary wooden barracks erected on the railway to the right front of Maizières, in which was quartered the Fusilier battalion of the 81st Regiment, of whose officers I had made the acquaintance on the 7th. My genial friend the Freiherr von Loewenfeld received me cordially, but there was a cloud on his face, the cause of which presently became apparent. The description which I sent you of the combat at Maizières had, it appears, been translated into the columns of the *Cölnischer Zeitung*, and it had become, therefore, apparent to the officers of the 81st that their gallant regiment had not received its due. It seems that at nine o'clock on the evening of the 7th (at which time I was in full trot on Courcélles with my letter), the 81st retook St. Rémy at the bayonet point, losing in the task five officers and over 100 men. In front of the Freiherr's quarters was another battery fort of 12-pounders, and on the other side of Maizières, before the Château of Amelange, stood yet another. We crossed the river at Hautconcourt, and came down to this place, which is comparatively on the foreposts, in the gloaming. This morning I quit my good friends of the fourgons, and strike across for my old quarters with the 4th Regiment at Noisseville or Retonfay.

Château Gras, before Metz, October 23.—I am back again among my old military friends, who received me with a frank and hearty soldierly welcome. But among the "kent faces" that greeted me I missed one or two whom I learnt to reckon friends. The adjutant of the battalion, a joyous lad fresh from the schools, a youngster of eighteen summers, had succumbed to the hardships of the situation. The marrow was not "set"

in the growing boy's bones, and where seasoned men find it not an easy matter to keep sickness from assailing them with success, the dart had penetrated through his green frame, and he had been compelled to go back to the Fatherland, a shattered veteran ere he had attained his full stature. I missed, too, another face, that of a lieutenant, whose determination to consider himself well, while as yet the fever had not left him, I had respected in one sense, while in another I had deprecated it. Wounded in the fight by Noisseville, on the 1st of September, he had been sent back to St. Wendel, where in the lazarette hospital fever had laid hold of him. His wound healed and the fever in part abated, the soldier lusted to be again with his comrades in the forefront of the battle, and he had quitted the lazarette, while as yet the dregs of the fever had not been eliminated from his frame. On the day of his arrival he lay beside me on the straw, with the alternate cold and hot fits working their will of him, and then I told him that his return had been premature. My words were made good by the fact that two days after the doctor had peremptorily insisted on his return to St. Wendel, and he has gained nothing by his enterprise save another strain on his constitution.

Such details as these may seem trivial to readers itching for reports of heady fights and important events. But of heady fights and of important events there have been none since I quitted my position at the front. When such occur, I shall do my best to furnish a narration of them. Meanwhile, such details as these may, to my thinking, serve the province of the background strokes which an artist stipples into his sketches. Such strokes, unimportant in themselves, serve to complete the amenity of a picture, the gaunt, if deep, lines of which would stand out strangely from the canvas but for such a supplement. The two cases I have alluded to have no inconsiderable interest in a larger sense. The battalion has about twenty officers as its complement; two out of this complement have "gone sick" within a week. This is ten per cent. I am officially informed that this is just a shade over the sick per-centage of the battalion, and also of the brigade. Exclusive of wounded, there are nine per cent. of the investing force in this section of the environment off duty from sickness. The ordinary per-centage in war time is five per cent.; the other four per cent. is the result of the hardships—the inevitable consequence of arduous duty and foul weather—which the troops before Metz are now undergoing. It must, however, be remembered, that of this per-centage of sick a considerable proportion consists of men suffering from comparatively slight and temporary illness, and

who recover in the field lazarettes without it being necessary to send them back into Germany. From three to four per cent. of the gross total of cases are of this character, the absence from duty of the men averaging from a week to ten days. Here we are on high ground, and comparatively out of reach of the dank fogs which chill and soften the bones of the men in the valley by the Moselle. In that low-lying district, I am sorry to have to report that the per-centage of sickness is greater, reaching as high in some places as fifteen per cent. About the middle of the month, with the change of the weather, there was, as was but natural, a sudden increase of sickness; but since then the diminution has been considerable and continuous. Dysentery and rheumatism are the chief diseases. Both have a tendency towards aggravation into fever. The former is prone to assume a typhoid form, the latter becomes aggravated into that terrible infliction, rheumatic fever. In the low-lying district there is also a good deal of that disorder which the German language so expressively designates as *wechsel-fieber*; corresponding to our ague, with its hot and cold fits. This in its turn degenerates into intermittent fever with a propensity to typhus, but quinine profusely administered is potent enough in most cases to ward off this aggravation. I enter into these details the more readily because I have reason to believe that reports have gone forth to the effect that the Prussian troops around Metz "are dying like rotten sheep." Such a statement contains its own refutation to one with eyes in his head. Whether a man dies "like a rotten sheep," or like the soldier of a civilized country, he equally demands interment. Burials are very rare in the field lazarettes, and recent graves in their vicinity equally so. I have had statistics placed at my disposal from which to derive authentic materials for the facts and figures which I have stated; and on the part of the Prussian authorities there is as little disposition to conceal the truth as to digest the erroneous and hap-hazard statements, with "rotten sheep" as their watchword, to which I have alluded. Intimately connected with the question of health is that of heart and spirits. As regards these, I can report in the most favourable terms. In damp great-coats and muddy boots the soldiers still cheerily raise the chorus of "Die Wacht am Rhein," with as hearty an energy as when the summer sun shone down upon them, and the roads were as dry as Piccadilly before the water-carts have traversed it. Assuming for the moment that this siege were to, last the winter, my opinion is that the beleaguering army is over the worst of it, as regards the strain on their health and physique. All are now housed, roughly enough it is true in places; but

then remember how the men have got seasoned. Wood is plentiful for fuel, and will be so all the winter, at the expense, it is true, of the amenity of the environs of the villages and the châteaux, but that is a matter not to be studied when put into competition with wet clothes and cold bodies. Then our internal welfare, in so far as plentiful provisions and good comforting liquids can conduce thereunto, is much ameliorated. In many of the villages in the second and third line enterprising merchants have set up stores, from which anything in reason can be procured. I don't know indeed that the kaufmann in Ste. Barbe, just behind us here, keeps Jockey Club scent, or that he is in correspondence with Pimm's in the matter of barrelled oysters, but he has decent cognac, good red wine, a cheese calculated to offend neither the nose nor the palate, sardines, caviare, and even the luxury of anchovy sauce.

A friend has kindly kept for me a little diary of the siege events on this face which have occurred since I retired to Saarbruck, but they are of so little importance as not to call for reproduction. The only actual sortie made by the French troops, and that in comparatively small numbers, was on the 16th inst., in the direction of the Brasserie. Of course they were driven back. They could have hoped for nothing else. All the damage they did was to shoot through the chest the *feldwebel* of the 6th Company. King Wilhelm had no better non-commissioned officer in all his vast army. Strauss smoked his cigar while the doctor cut the bullet out of his back, the lieutenant beside whom he was shot holding him up when the operation was being performed. Then he quietly squared up his company-book, and counting the money in his hands (the *feldwebel* is the pay sergeant of the company) handed everything over to his successor in right trim, and went away philosophically in the waggon to a lazaretto.

French deserters from Metz are becoming quite a nuisance. I telegraphed yesterday to you about a lying hound whom I encountered, and most of them may be entered in the same category. On the 20th an officer and fifty men of the infantry came into the Prussian lines here in a body. They were brought to Glatigny, and underwent the usual *pro formâ* examination. The officer stated that everything but horseflesh was practically exhausted in Metz. What else was to the fore the line troops saw nothing of, except a liquor ration. The Guards still continued to receive a few "extras," and this circumstance so excited the jealousy of the line men that between the two branches of the service there existed a bitter hostility. An epidemic, resulting from starvation, had set in among the

horses. This, if true, I reckon the most important piece of intelligence we have received for some time respecting the internal condition of Metz. We know here that the French horses cannot have a very clovery time of it. We see them being driven from place to place over the brown and down-trodden pasture-land, and three were captured by a patrol the other day which would have been of value to a veterinary college as excellent subjects from which, without either previous slaughter or vivisection, to study anatomy. But a positive epidemic among the horses we have not hitherto heard of, and I need not point to its importance as a compelling argument towards capitulation. Yesterday twenty French soldiers with an officer very adroitly suffered themselves to be taken prisoners in front of Servigny. They came out of the Bois de Grimont on the pretext of a foraging expedition, but there is no doubt with the express intention of offering a temptation for their being made prisoners. Here are seventy virtual deserters in twenty-four hours from the garrison of Metz. At other points, as I learnt on my circuit, they are swarming in, and the aggregate must be large. It is a curious circumstance that none of the *quasi* fugitives are ever fired upon. I have learned to have a great respect for Bazaine, and I cannot help imagining he is not only cognizant, but the instigator of these wholesale desertions. It is hardly a secret that his recent offer was the surrender of his army as prisoners of war, exclusive of the fortress of Metz and its outworks. The Prussian authorities simply laughed at this cool proposal; but these desertions would seem to indicate an attempt on Bazaine's part to carry out his programme piecemeal. Let the Prussians alone for recognizing the bent of tactics like these. A few deserters are useful, and not to be discouraged. Assume that none of them speak the truth; King David tells us that "all men are liars," and yet from our fellow-men's utterances we contrive to extract some grains of truth. In like manner a little wheat can be winnowed out of the chaff of a deserter's farragos, and this little is acceptable. When a number come, they represent simply so much more food for those left behind in Metz, and proportionate postponement of the capitulation. You will not be surprised, therefore, that the order has been issued to receive no more bodies of deserters into the lines, but to send them back whence they came by the powerful argument of the needle-gun. It would be interesting to know how it is that so many of the deserters are drunk when they come. Is strong drink on tap in the outposts round Metz, or are the men dosed for the attempt? The latter hypothesis might seem to be borne out by the fact, of which I have been assured, not by the French

prisoners alone, but by Prussian doctors who administered to the French wounded, that the French tirailleurs who pushed so boldly to the front at Maizières on the 7th were all full of brandy. *Ichabod! Ichabod!* How has the glory departed from the French arms when we find their leaders compelled to infuse Dutch courage into their soldiers! The French were the readiest to scorn the Russian serf-soldier because when he came up through the fog-wreaths on the morning of Inkermann, his sluggish pulses had been quickened by corn schnapps. Now, it would seem that they find the same unsoldier-like stimulant requisite in their own case.

I have heard Count Bismarck compared to an elephant's trunk, as one for whom nothing was too great or too small. But Bismarck is not the only Prussian who finds time in the whirl of great events to contradict an inventive correspondent, or to put himself straight with the world on a seemingly trivial point. I was much amused by an item in last night's orders from Prince Frederick Charles's head-quarters. It was to the effect that whereas an unprincipled rascal of a Hamburg cigar merchant had been selling boxes of cigars to the troops, the upper tier of which consisted of good weeds, while the lower ones were unmitigated trash, the military authorities of any place where this astute gentleman should present himself were enjoined to lay hold of him and transmit him to Prince Frederick Charles's head-quarters at Corny. At such an entry one may smile, but I defy him to refrain from respecting the all-pervading care and watchfulness which takes cognizance of such a matter as this. In such care and watchfulness lies the root of much of the Prussian success. A campaign is not made victorious by dint of fighting alone—how much success depends on efficient organization, even as regards seeming trifles! I regret that the British military administration have not attained this perception, or at all events have not chosen to act on it. Another quaint entry in general orders some time ago occurs to me as I write—"Whereas a gold watch has been found by ———, in the vicinity of Ars-sur-Moselle, the owner may have it, on giving a description, by application to the Etappen Command."

Château-Gras, a little distance to the front of Ste. Barbe, must have been a beautiful village before the tide of war came and strewed sand and shingle over its charms. A fine old château is the principal building in it, the noble garden of which is very little injured, while the furniture has also suffered very little. In a room on the ground floor the books still stand in the long ranges of shelves upon the wall. When the nobleman who owns it comes back, he will have an agreeable surprise. So

careful are the Prussians to prevent injury to property, that on the door of every room occupied by them is pasted an inventory of its contents, for which the successive occupants are held responsible, just as in a barracks at home. The château is now occupied by troops, but till lately was a large Feld Lazareth, occupied by the wounded of the fights before Noisseville of the 31st of August and 1st of September. The smell of the chloride of lime is still so powerful in the beautiful rooms, that some of the officers prefer more modest quarters in the houses of the village. When the owner of the château comes back, he will find that the war has left him a legacy, the memory of which will not speedily fade out. Of the wounded in the great lazarette not a few succumbed before the grim king of terrors, more potent than the bullets and shells of the enemy. In a quiet corner of the garden, looking out through the trees on to St. Julien, St. Quentin, Les Bottes, and the great towers of the Cathedral in the centre, is a graveyard, where lie those who died of their wounds in the lazarette. It is prettily enclosed with a wooden paling. The one great grave, over 100 yards in length, is banked up with green sods, and the surface trimly raked. It is flanked by a great wooden cross bearing the simple inscription:—"Hier ruhen 285 Preussische und 5 Französische tapfere Krieger." There are besides several graves of officers, which are adorned with boxwood crosses planted in the soil, and with wreaths of immortelles.

Petit Marais, before Metz, October 25, Morning.—Deserters continue to afford the principal topic for conversation. It is a clever idea of Bazaine, now that his proposal for surrendering his army without the capitulation of the fortress has been rejected, to work off his army by detail. That this is his policy I think there can be no reasonable doubt. An officer and fifty men cannot walk away in a body, as they did yesterday in front of Noisseville, without being interrupted, if any one cared to do so, and the French leaders must have awakened to the fact that the Prussian authorities had comprehended the scheme when they saw the little party sent back the way they came. We receive deserters who come in singly or in pairs, because their information is more or less useful. From one of these information of considerable exactitude and apparent truthfulness was received last night. He spoke of a rapid and continuous diminution in the rations served out to the troops, and of increasing irregularity in the supply. Eight days ago the bread ration was half a pound a day for each man. Now it is reduced to four ounces, and there is difficulty in procuring this morsel. The man understood that the inhabitants of Metz received the same rations as the Guards who lie around Bazaine at St.

Martin, and who receive rather more food than the other troops, and are used, by reason of their superior discipline and their greater contentment, as a means of keeping the line regiments in some semblance of order. To each *peloton* a live horse is given per day, but the man describes the brutes as consisting of little else than bones and hide. There can be little wonder that the number of sick is greatly on the increase under such circumstances. Out of 800 men, of which this man's battalion consisted, 200 were sick and unfit for duty. Those who are nominally able are, he says, in a state of great weakness, and certainly his own appearance corroborated this statement.

Various statements appear to have been made within the last day or two by the French generals to their troops, to keep them from falling into utter despondency. I telegraphed to you yesterday one piece of information of this character. Another man brings out a cock-and-bull story about a general order, to the effect that the Empress was to arrive in Metz yesterday, and to assume the supreme power, and that then to-day the whole army was to march away to the north by permission of the Prussians. The authorities appear to have interpreted these statements as giving intimation of a sortie in great force towards the north to-morrow. General orders to-day contained a formal intimation that the negotiations regarding capitulation, which had been going on, had been definitely broken off. Orders are issued with a view to cope with a sortie, should it occur, to-morrow. The line to the north of Metz on both sides of the river has been greatly strengthened, and the troops in the third line all round are called out, at five o'clock this morning, taking up positions enabling them to act efficiently as reserves and supports for the first and second lines.

On the face of things it would seem that a sortie to-day is physically impossible. It has rained with hardly any intermission for three days, and it rains now. Except where the macadam of the *chaussées* affords a hard bottom under the mud, the country cannot be traversed on foot. One flounders helplessly in the slippery stuff till he gets to a deeper place than usual, and then has to struggle vehemently to prevent himself from sticking outright. No regiment could keep its formation in ground so yielding, and to move artillery or train, except on the macadamized roads, must be utterly impossible. Nevertheless the Prussian troops are waiting for what, if it comes at all, must be the last effort, and that one made out of pure Quixotry. I write this hurried and short letter, so to speak, with foot in stirrup. I am going to ride round to the Moselle valley, down which, as on the 7th, the chief effort of the sortie

must come, if it be made at all, which I doubt. The quietude for the last few days of the forts and foreposts is accounted for by a deserter, who states that an order has been issued to reserve the fire, and reprobating the purposeless blazing into space which has hitherto been a characteristic of the defence. It may be straining a point to interpret this into signifying shortness of ammunition. Last night there was a loud explosion on the outskirts of Metz. It is thought one of the powder magazines had blown up.

Château-Gras, October 24.—This has been a great day with us here in Château-Gras. It was our doctor's birthday, and there was no reason why we should not keep it while the generals are finishing the more serious business. Our doctor is a man unknown to fame, but he deserves it more than many a man who has earned it. He is of the fighting, jolly style of medico: although his business is to cure wounds, he has no objection, but the contrary, to cut out work for himself. If you met him in Cork, you would unhesitatingly set him down as a native, with his merry black eyes, wide laughing mouth, and—how shall I put it delicately?—his nose with the Hibernian bend. And it was the birthday of this excellent fellow.

I could not make out in the morning why *appell* was hurried over so rapidly; but I was soon to learn. The adjutant tucked my arm under his, and marched me off into the château. Although the name of the owner of this residence is Mons. d'Espagne, his château is by no means *en Espagne*; on the contrary, it is a substantially-built edifice, with very handsome rooms, affording excellent quarters, if one does not mind semi-asphyxiation with chloride of lime. Of the *salle* the officers have made a mess-room, and it was into this fine apartment that the adjutant guided me about ten o'clock this morning. We were, one and all, it seemed, the guests of the doctor on this the anniversary of his natal morn. Nor was the doctor hospitable without the means. A certain good lady who calls him husband, and who dwells in Königsberg, had not forgotten the day, and as a birthday present had sent her good man a great chest. The sum total of the contents of that chest the world through me can never know. The enumeration I heard indeed, but I lost the tally when the doctor was about half through it. Suffice it to say, that the table groaned under a load of delicacies. I have seen a telegram from Berlin to the effect that the troops before Metz were living on mutton. The telegraphist would have opened his eyes had he dropped in this morning. There was *schinken* and boiled ham, there was a German sausage as big as the good heart of the doctor's wife, there was a snug little barrel

of *sardellen*, pickled with bay-leaves; there was German ginger-bread and rusks; there was fresh butter, and there was *compot* of plums, and I don't know what else. Then, for drink, there was the choice of Malaga and claret, rum, brandy, Hamburg bitters and absinthe, and a hearty welcome to season all. We have a curious way of eating in the foreposts—what may be styled a miscellaneous manner of feeding. Sausage, ginger-bread, sardines, and *compot* are seen on one plate at once, and serve to season one another in a very impartial way. I don't think the doctor could reasonably complain of the appetites which were brought to his feast. He had one appetite of which he could have had no anticipation. Just as we were in the middle of the feast, a miserable devil of a French deserter was brought in from the foreposts. I never before saw the wolfish glare of absolute hunger darting from a man's eyes. Wet, dirty, half rotten seemingly from scurvy, with puffed lips and hollow cheeks, this gaunt spectacle of a man devoured the food with his great staring eyes. He could not reply to any questions, so concentrated was he upon his gaze at our breakfast, and when the *hauptmann* threw him the meaty ham-bone, it positively made one shudder to see the dog-like style in which he fell a-worrying of it. When all, including, I hope, the poor wretch in the lobby, had eaten their fill, the senior *hauptmann* called for full glasses, and in a neat speech proposed the doctor's health. The doctor was very waggish in his reply. He suggested we should dedicate a bumper to St. Julien and Les Bottes, because they had been courteous enough not to intervene to the detriment of the crockeryware, and expressed further a fervent wish that Bazaine were making one of the company. By twelve o'clock the doctor was drunk out—that is, his stores were—but a happy thought struck a lieutenant concerning a barrel of beer which he had in his room. This was fetched, and its contents went the way of the doctor's stores.

As we broke up, I heard the word go round that there would be a "picnic" in the evening. One is apt to associate the idea of a picnic with leafy glades, blue muslin, bad champagne, and lobster salad. None of these *agréments* had we here. The rain was falling fast, the wintry wind was blowing bitterly, and the idea of a picnic seemed about as wild as would have been the suggestion of an oratory. But nevertheless the "picnic" came off, although not quite according to my preconceived notions of this institution. It was an indoor picnic; in point of fact, it took place in the hall where the doctor gave his breakfast. It was on the mutual co-operation principle—everybody was expected to bring something. My contribution

was a box of sardines, a lump of butter, and a bottle of rum. I am afraid this was not quite up to the general mark; but what I had I gave—I could no more. I stood in the lobby awhile watching the arrivals and their several contributions. One *hauptmann* was accompanied by his servant carrying half a dozen of red wine, a lieutenant had a leg of mutton and a bag full of sugar under his cloak. The hall looked quite civilized. On the great round table in the centre stood an actual moderator lamp, with a painted shade atop of it, its pedestal resting on a mat. Talk of war times, here was refinement with a vengeance! A great wood fire blazed cheerfully on the hearth, and the glasses—somewhat nondescript in shape and size, it is true—sparkled on the board. After a brief pause the first service of tippie was brought in, contained in a white soup-tureen and an antique china vase. The tippie was very good—I regret being unable to furnish the recipe for its composition. I may state, however, that among the ingredients were red wine, white wine, rum, cognac, schnapps, cloves, and cinnamon. Of the proportions of each I could learn nothing. I incline to the opinion that a “stock” pot with the red wine was put on, and as contributions came in, that they were emptied into the pot promiscuously.

For about two hours conversation, alternated with story-telling, was the order of the evening. The talk fell once upon the causes of the French defeats, and after various explanations had been started, a sententious premier lieutenant, who had not previously opened his mouth, struck in with this original illustration and very sound theory:—“The chief rabbi of the Dantzic Jews had taken a new house, and his flock determined to stock his wine-butt for him. An evening was set apart for the affair, and one after another the Jews went down into the cellar and emptied each his bottle into the big vat. When the rabbi came next day to draw off his dinner wine, he found there was nothing in the cask but water. Each and every Jew had said to himself that one bottle of water could never be noticed in so great a quantity of wine, and all acting up to this, the rabbi had not got a drop of wine in his butt. Now it was just the same with the French army. One soldier said to himself that it would not matter a copper if he sneaked away; in so great a multitude he would not be missed. But the devil of it was that one and all took this line of reasoning, and the result was, that nobody was left to look our battalions in the face.” Everybody laughed at the premier lieutenant’s quaint illustration, and then we had a stand-up supper at the sideboard. That finished, singing was the order of the evening. It surprised me not a little when one of the officers

struck up "My heart's in the Highlands," and almost all were able to chime in, not alone with the tune, but the words. The doctor treated us to a composition of his own, composed to illustrate passing events, for the burden of it was—"The Bois de Grimont, oh!" The Bois de Grimont is the wood out of which the French sharpshooters so persistently pepper away at our foreposts. Encouraged by the success of this effort, he gave us another song *pour l'occasion*, the chorus of which mixed up "Mercy-le-Haut" and "Der Teufel" in some mysterious manner. It may interest the British music-hall patrons to know that a translation of "The Captain with the Whiskers" is one of the chief favourites with the Prussian officers. They rattle away at its lively chorus with great delight. We had it to-night over and over again. At ten o'clock, the "stock" pot being empty, we broke up with great joviality. My three room-companions are now slumbering profoundly on the common straw, to which I also now betake myself. Nothing new in siege operations. Several bodies of deserters driven back to-day by the Prussian foreposts. Weather still "November" in the extreme.

CHAPTER XII.

THE capitulation of Metz, with the whole army of Marshal Bazaine encamped under its walls, took place on the 27th of October, seventy days after the battle of Gravelotte. Three Marshals of France, 6,000 officers, and 173,000 men were included in the surrender. The scenes which followed the capitulation showed that some of the corps had become demoralized, but the men of the Imperial Guard had preserved their discipline and self-respect to the last, and took leave of their officers with demonstrations of strong regard.

Metz, October 29.—After all our long waiting from day to day in anticipation of the capitulation of Metz, that event came upon us with a strange suddenness. It was only a few days ago that it was mentioned in the general orders from the Prussian head-quarters that the negotiations had definitively closed; and when men heard this they set their teeth hard, and prepared for another spell of waiting, variegated with fighting. But there were symptoms of the end being imminent in the haggard deserters who came among us from day to day, with their longing looks at our black bread and flesh. Another symptom of the end I became acquainted with. Orders were issued several days ago to the railway people in Saarbruck

to have material in readiness for repairing the railway communication direct into Metz. This indicated what was expected at head-quarters, and was a sign of the times which I thought it not politic to disregard. But still, when the report ran round the regiment, on the afternoon of the 27th, that the capitulation had actually been negotiated, some found it difficult to realize the fact—confirmation was wanting. It was true that the generals commanding the several Army Corps had been summoned to Frescati by an order of Prince Frederick Charles; but everything looked so much in the ordinary way, that people could not realize the fact of the capitulation. Men went on the field-watch as usual, and the confronting foreposts still continued to exchange shots. No white flag was visible, and the unbelieving Thomases of the 4th shrugged their shoulders, and would have none of the tidings. The story then got wind that all that had happened was the capitulation of Bazaine's army without the fortress. This proposition it was known the Prussian authorities had already rejected, and it was argued from the prevalence of the report to this effect, that the whole story about the capitulation was a fabrication. I now proceed to give you details of the manner in which the occupation and disarmament were effected.

At twelve o'clock yesterday forenoon each of the outlying fortresses was taken possession of by two battalions of Prussian infantry, a squadron of cavalry, one heavy battery without tumbrils, 100 artillerymen with the complement of officers, and an engineer detachment. The following is the apportionment of the force of occupation. The troops occupying

St. Quentin	were found by	15th Infantry Division.
Plappeville	„ „	3rd Army Corps.
St. Julien	„ „	1st Army Corps.
Queleu	„ „	8th Army Corps.
St. Privat	„ „	Hessian Division.

At the same hour a battalion of the 7th Army Corps marched forward, and took possession of La Porte Serpenoise, one of the gates of Metz, and another battalion from the same corps occupied the Porte Moselle. Two hours before the occupation of the fortress, I should observe, there were sent forward from each of the occupying detachments an artillery officer and a small body of under-officers, accompanied by engineers, to take over the powder magazines and the respective forts, and they sent out the report to the effect that all was in order before the troops were allowed to march in. This precaution was no doubt dictated by a recollection of the catastrophe at Laon.

At one o'clock yesterday it was ordered that the French army should formally lay down its arms. There was no set ceremony, yet the affair was imposing from its very simplicity. It was conducted in detail, each corps laying down its arms in the neighbourhood of its own station. I saw the 3rd Army Corps—that of Lebœuf—disarm itself. The Marshal himself came first, a scowl upon his swarthy features. He wheeled to one side, and stood by the single Prussian officer whose duty it was to superintend the stacking of the arms. Regiment after regiment the men defiled past, piling their arms in great heaps at the word of command from their own officers, who gave their parole, and were allowed to retain their swords. This applies to most. There were, however, some who declined to accept the terms, and who preferred going with their men into captivity in Prussia. These laid down their swords as the men did their Chassepôts, building quite a little heap of them to the right of the great stacks of rifles. The disarmed French troops then returned into their bivouacs, which they occupied for one night more, before quitting for other bivouacs round which shall stand Prussian sentries. For this last night they preserved a semblance of freedom. The Prussians left them to themselves. Except in the forts and at the two gates I have mentioned, not a spiked helmet was to be seen nearer Metz than had been seen a week before. The *feldwachen* were mounted as usual, the *replis* were established, and the troops stood fast as ever in their long and weary watch around Metz. This morning the Frenchmen came forth and surrendered themselves to their captors—corps by corps, and under the command of their own officers. The 6th Corps (Canrobert's) came from its bivouac by Woippy to Ladonchamps, where on the 7th so many of its members had stained the soil with their blood. Their prison-bivouac is on the plain in the rear of the wrecked and burnt village. The 7th Corps, that of L'Admirault, came out over the ridge between St. Quentin and Plappeville, and found quarters—inhabitable enough, I fear—on the bleak plateau of St. Maurice. The Imperial Guard marched down to Longeville, crossed the railway-bridge at Tournebride, passed on to Frescati to the left, and found their bivouac in the plain between Orly and Augny. The garrison of Metz itself, consisting of about 20,000 men, chiefly Mobile Guards, marched by Le Sablon, past the ruined village of Magny, and so forward to the outskirts of St. Thiebault. The 2nd Corps (Froissard's), with Laveauconfied's Division and the 4th Brigade, came out past La Posette on the great Strasburg *chaussée*, and found their bivouac behind the village of Grigy. The 3rd Corps (that of Lebœuf) came out among us of the 1st Prussian

Army Corps, along the *chaussée* leading to Saarlouis. Each corps, as it marched out, was received by the Prussian troops covering the respective section of the environment. They were led by their own officers, who formally handed over their men to the Prussian officers, and then those of them who had given their parole were at liberty to quit the ranks and return to Metz. The men, under the command of their under-officers, were then marched out to the bivouac places, which had previously been partly prepared; wood for fires having been collected, and a supply of provisions being ready for distribution.

I was with the 1st Army Corps when it took up its position to receive the corps of Lebœuf. From all the villages around—the villages inhabited for so many weary weeks, the villages made memorable by fights, by burnings, by graves, by sickness, and by deaths—streamed the regiments on to the *chaussée*. There had been much rain during the night, and although the sun broke out about ten o'clock, the watery haze hung about the bottoms of the valleys, and the mud splashed as the troops strode through it. Mud! why, we have had nothing but mud for weeks, and should we mind it now, looking at the errand on which we are bound? No. The “Wacht am Rhein” rises lustily from the pioneers in the front, and the regiments as they come down the side-roads catch up the strain. On we go past the Brasserie, with the grenade-pits, the graves, and the entrenchments around it—itsself a mere heap of shattered bricks—on to the gentle slope behind the village of Lauvallier. Then right and left wheeled the heavy columns, leaving the *chaussée* open, a parallelogram of about 100 feet in width on each side of it. In front of the Brasserie stood the artillery, before the artillery the serried ranks of brass-spiked helmets all the way down the gentle slope, almost to Lauvallier. Arms were piled, and there the Prussians waited for the advent of the army with which it almost seemed, through the length of time that we had confronted each other, that we could claim a kind of personal acquaintance. While the troops waited I pushed forward towards Metz to meet the Frenchmen. Already, it is true, we had plenty of Frenchmen among us, but they were all civilians, and there were Frenchwomen too, and French children. The road had been opened this morning, and they came crowding out, the poor creatures who had abandoned their village homes and crowded into the town when the pennons of the Unlans had shown themselves on the fringes of the villages. On they came, waggon-load after waggon-load, with their trumpery household goods and their agricultural implements piled on the waggons behind the

women and children. They knew not what it was that they had come out for to see. Perhaps they expected to find their cottage homes as they had left them—not roofless, wrecked, utterly ruined, as is the grim reality. Lauvallier seemed to give the first shock to their cheerfulness. Gaunt and grim stood its houses, burnt to the shell, the graves lying all around, the holes in the fields where the shells had burst, the breastworks behind which had stood the Prussian foreposts. As each waggon and each knot of peasants came into Lauvallier there was a halt, and full many a “*Mon Dieu !*” In Lauvallier there is a large tannery, which must have employed many workmen, and been an important and profitable concern. It is now a mere shell—not a fragment of the woodwork is left. This forenoon I chanced upon its owner standing on the bluff over against his property, and gazing upon it in moody silence. Twenty paces farther on I came on a little group, the extreme pathos of which made my heart swell. It was a family, and they sat in front of what had once been their home. That home was now roofless. The stones of the walls were all that was left. The garden was a wreck, and the whole scene was concentrated desolation. The husband leant against the wall, his arms folded, and his head on his chest. The wife sat on the wet ground, weeping over the babe at her breast. Two elder children stared around them with wonder and unconcern—too young to realize the misfortune which had overtaken all the family. The silence of the grief-stricken group was more eloquent than any words. No home, no food, a waggon and a couple of starved horses, a field with four graves in it. This is the brief summary of the belongings and condition of the family. All are alike ; although this family was the one I happened to see, because the home lay on my road in Lauvallier, the same piteous sight must ere now be visible by every house in every village all around Metz. What need for me to occupy space by writing of what every one with a grain of human sympathy in his composition can picture and mourn over for himself?

If the horses were lean, I saw no evidence of starvation in the features of the people I met. The stream of *émigrés* continued as I came up the slope on the flat, on the edge of which lies the improvised fortification of the village of Belle Croix—that which, in this correspondence, I have distinguished as “Little Belle Croix,” to distinguish it from the great fort of the same name. Belle Croix was ghastly in its utter solitude. Burnt and shattered by Prussian shells, it must nevertheless have been a very strong position. All round the entrenchment, across the road, is a moat of some depth. The angles are

stockades, the walls loopholed, and there still stand in position a couple of field-guns, which, as the Prussians know to their cost, many a time were located with great skill. Owing to the block caused by the entrenchment the road had been diverted. It had been little enough used before this morning. The grass grew thickly on the *chaussée* between Lauvallier and Belle Croix. As the peasant-waggons came crowding out, they stuck in the heavy mire of this *détour*, and many were the "sacrés" before they were started again, the lean horses being too weak to pull them through the heavy ground. Just in front of this village of Belle Croix is the bisection of the road both leading to Saarlouis and Saarbruck. When I had passed Belle Croix, I could not help owing to myself that I had never till then succeeded in forming a proper conception of the real strength of the natural position of Metz. On the right, with a valley intervening like a deep trench, lay the blunt-topped mountain crowned by Fort St. Julien. On its slope were the bivouac-fires of the troops of Lebœuf. Nothing could venture on this slope—a great natural glacis—so long as Fort St. Julien thought proper to forbid the passage. On my left, also on an eminence, although, from the positions whence I had previously seen it, it appeared to be on a flat, lay Fort Queleu, square and massive, dominating the plateau to the left of the *chaussée*. But this plateau is closed in Metzward by a fortification all to itself—the great earthwork of Les Bottes, whose grenades had so often burst in disagreeable proximity to us, and which now stood solitary and empty, with not even a sentry on its earthen summit. Over the top of Fort Les Bottes were visible the towers of the cathedral, and the picture was framed in by the background of that great and elevated ridge of which the two chief peaks are crowned by Forts St. Quentin and Plappeville.

It was just beyond Les Bottes that I met the first French soldier—a cavalryman of the line. The fellow was as drunk as he well could be to be able to move at all. He staggered forward, dropping his kit piecemeal as he came. At a bend in the road behind Four-à-Chaux, I came upon the head of the prisoner column, marching onward for their reception at the Brasserie. The men were in a very miserable state, covered with mud, wet—sodden seemingly, indeed, through and through with wet—many of their faces blotched and scabbed with scurvy, and quite one-third in a state of drunkenness. Not a few were in a state of bestial intoxication, their clothes disarranged, and decency utterly disregarded. A little farther on, and right and left, lay the great bivouac before Fort Belle Croix. The troops were being collected by their officers in *pelotons* pre-

viously to being marched out, and several columns were already converging on the great *chaussée*. As each body got the order to go forward, a cheer came from the slovenly and dislocated ranks, and from the columns on the march there broke out at intervals a fitful chorus of some lively marching song. Most of the officers were grave, taciturn, and downcast. Surely they must have despised the reckless throng which they nominally commanded. The demoralization of the Metz army is not so great as was that of the Sedan army, but it is very great. The men obey their officers and regard the sound of the bugle after a fashion, but it is evident that they are utterly unaffected by the catastrophe which has befallen the arms of their country, and are eager only to get somewhere where a full meal of victuals awaits them. Poor wretches! after all, it is not fair to be too severe on their disorganization. How near actual starvation they had come to before their leader would give up the game I shall narrate before I conclude this letter.

Passing the columns of prisoners at a canter, I was back again before the Brasserie ere the front of the column had reached the place where stood the Prussians waiting for them. The dismounted cavalry came first, followed by the artillery; last of all came the infantry of the line. The cavalry seemed to have lost all self-respect; they greeted the Prussians with cheering, and several men broke from the ranks and slouched forward through the mud with intent to salute with a spirituous kiss the Prussian officers standing in front of their companies. It was curious to notice the opposite idiosyncrasies of the two nationalities. Grave and stern stood the Prussian victors, with, as it seemed, a silent pity rather than contempt for the demented tatterdemalions who proffered them the undesirable greeting; while the Frenchmen chattered and gesticulated, "sacréed" and spluttered, sang and laughed as they marched through the gauntlet of humiliation. The officers quitted their commands as each reached the alley fringed by the Prussian battalions, and returned to Metz or the vicinity. The troops comprising the whole of the 3rd Corps, till yesterday under the command of Lebœuf, and numbering about 23,000 men, were escorted to a position between Château-Gras and Retonfay, where was fixed the site for their bivouac. The positions of the other bivouacs I have already detailed. The guards for the French prisoners are to be contributed in rotation by the several divisions. The daily quota for the bivouac at Château-Gras is four battalions of infantry, one battery of artillery, and one squadron of cavalry. In command of it has been placed Colonel von Sietzen Hennig, of the 4th Regiment,

his adjutant being Lieutenant von Versin. Food has been collected for the supply of the prisoners, who will have to bivouac in the open air. From to-morrow, daily drafts, each 3,000 strong, will be sent into Germany *viâ* Saarbruck and Saarlouis. In all, the capture consists of 173,000 men, including three marshals, 47 general officers, 6,000 regimental officers, and about 500 guns. Of the latter, a large proportion is of course heavy artillery, much of which can be utilized in the siege of Paris, if that event really takes place. I may as well conclude my details as to the Prussian dispositions. General Kummer, hitherto in command of the Landwehr, is appointed commandant of Metz. He has taken up his quarters in the house recently occupied by the French Commandant on the Place d'Armes. General von Zastrow takes the control of all arrangements connected with the transport of the prisoners and the quartermastership generally of the district around Metz and as far as Thionville. It is anticipated that in seven days all the prisoners will have been sent away. The Prussian army before Metz is destined to disruption. Two Army Corps will march towards Lille, two more towards Besançon, and then there will be left a considerable force to be sent on to Paris.

After I had seen Lebœuf's command taken over by the 1st Army Corps, I returned towards Metz, meeting on my way a stream of straggling soldiers who had missed their corps, and were staggering out under loads of tents, blankets, and what not. The environs of the town are very desolate and very filthy. Mud, raw horseflesh, burnt-out bivouac fires, huts made of the branches of trees, old women and skeleton horses, are the leading characteristics. There was no difficulty in getting into the town, where I found the shops all open, and, to all appearance, no scarcity. Meat hung in the butchers' shops, the cafés were crowded, and there appeared no exhaustion in the stocks of the shops devoted to the sale of any material. Tobacco was plentiful, wine, spirits, and liquors in great abundance. Making my way to the Hôtel de l'Europe, I found it crowded with French officers; and I also found there one Englishman, Dr. Ward, of the International Society for the Succour of the Wounded, who has just been decorated by the French military authorities for his attention to the wounded; and two Americans—Dr. Good, of the same society, and who has also been decorated; and Mr. Eustis, a commercial gentleman, who had spent forty-eight days of the siege in prison under suspicion of being a spy. The spy mania has raged very strongly in Metz. Seventy-eight persons were arrested on suspicion in one day. Eight in all have been shot as con-

victed spies, including the notorious Schull, to whose adroitness and accurate information the French believe Von Moltke was indebted for his knowledge of the weakness of the French dispositions on the frontier, and for the hint which he utilized into the successes at Wörth and Weissenburg. I don't think I can do better than give you, in a tabular form, the tariff of prices for food now ruling in Metz:—

Beef	8 francs per lb.
Horseflesh	10 centimes to 2 francs per lb.: "choice horse," the tender loin, fetches the latter price.
Eggs	1 franc each: have been 1f. 20c.
Fowls	20 francs each.
Pike (fish)	8 francs per lb.
Coffee	6 francs per lb.
Ham	8 francs per lb.
Cheese	40 francs per lb. (nominal; all done.)
Salt	5 francs per lb.
Geese, fat	65 francs per pair paid yesterday.
Oats	120 francs for sack of 200 lb.
Horses	16 francs each: to-day no market at any price.
Chocolate	5 francs per lb.
Bread	White, none since 16th inst.; brown 4½ sous per lb.
Mutton	None for two months.
Wine	Plentiful, and old prices maintained; bottle of champagne for 7 francs.

Notwithstanding these extraordinary prices, the tariff in the Hôtel de l'Europe is much the same as usual. I dined here this evening at the *table d'hôte* for 7 francs, including half a bottle of wine. Breakfast is *à la carte*, about 7 francs; bottle of champagne, 7 francs. We had four courses for dinner, and no horseflesh—at least the waiter said not. The room was crowded with French officers. I dined at the same table with Colonel Michel Ney, a nephew of the historical Marshal. He had received some half-dozen sabre-wounds in the cavalry fight at Vionville, and was only half recovered. At the same table also sat General Duplessis, a French officer of distinction, who also has been severely wounded. This evening there was a tremendous rush of Prussian officers into the hotel. Quarters cannot be had now at any price. Forty officers have been sent away from the Hôtel de l'Europe to-night, and I am indebted to a good-hearted American for half his bed. The

French and Prussian officers are fraternizing in the *salle* as I write. At first the Frenchmen were a little inclined to be sulky and reserved, but the heartiness of the Prussians soon thawed the ice, and the champagne is promoting the flow of kindly feeling. I am told that this forenoon, when the officers of the Imperial Guard said adieu to their men, profuse tears were shed by both. There was no such emotion manifested by Lebœuf's corps.

The scarcity of bread has caused great suffering, and after that the want most severely felt has been that of salt, the price of which I have already quoted. There are saline springs within the French lines, and the water from these has been selling at 1fr. 50c. per bottle. There has been some inconvenience from lack of water suitable for drinking. The troops have suffered fearfully. For days at a time they have had no bread ration at all served out to them, and have had to live wholly on lean horseflesh. Over 50,000 horses have been consumed during the siege. It is a curious fact that folks with so great a genius for cookery as the French, should have been indebted to the Prussians for a hint in this line, but such is the case. There are still some 600 Prussian prisoners here in the town—taken at intervals during the siege. These fellows, when they got their horseflesh, treated it as they do their own ration meat—chop it up into minced meat with onions and meal, then consolidate it into a block and fry it. This the Prussians called “klopp,” and the French “klopp”-ified their horseflesh in imitation of the Prussians. But no device can make palatable the flesh, or rather the sinews, of the miserable screws to which most of the horses in Metz have been reduced. The divisional chaplain of the Guards has just told me that he, the day before yesterday, gave a pound of bread to three captains—all noblemen—of the Imperial Guard, which was the first bread they had tasted for three days.

Yesterday afternoon, when the news of the capitulation was made known, there was a sort of revolutionary riot in Metz. The Garde Nationale made a display of refusing to give up their arms, ran to the Place d'Armes, where they congregated in large numbers, and several shots were fired. The cathedral rang the alarm-bell, and the shops put their shutters up. The mob, composed in a large proportion of civilians, laid hold of an officer of the Imperial Guard, and, holding pistols at his head, forced him to carry in the front the Republican flag. A hint from the mayor that the Prussians would be sent for to put down the disturbance had its effect, after the *gamins* had roared themselves hoarse shouting “Vive la République!” There were also some clamours for Bazaine's life-blood, but

the Marshal, with great discretion, remained in his quarters at Ban St. Martin.

It was not until ten days ago that the troops of Bazaine's army were forbidden to enter the town of Metz. Up till then they circulated freely in the town, using the cafés, and spending their money in the shops. Until six days ago a ration of bread of 100 grammes was issued to each soldier. Since then they have had no rations, except horseflesh. The townspeople have been on bread rations as well as the troops, the ration consisting of 200 grammes of brown bread. Those who are able pay for their ration; the poor have been receiving it gratuitously. It surprises me that Metz has been able to hold out so long. The place has not above 60,000 inhabitants, if so many, and it has supported for seventy days a gross population of 230,000 mouths. These are the official figures. The dearness of provisions has been progressive. For instance, on the 16th of August, butter had already reached the fancy price of 4*f.* per pound. On the same day chickens ranged from 6*f.* to 8*f.* Now butter cannot be procured at any price, and the same may be said of chickens. Metz has certainly not capitulated for want of munitions of war. The fortress has supplies for two years still left. The inside of the ramparts is lined continually with projectiles. At the beginning of the siege there were in store 12,000 projectiles for each gun—at least so I am informed. Although Metz is an arsenal, no manufacture of cannon or projectiles has gone on during the siege. There has been no occasion for any such work, and if there had, the want of coals would have presented an insuperable obstacle. All the coal used in Metz comes from Saarbruck, and there has recently been great scarcity—so much so that an order was issued a week ago that the gas in the town should be extinguished at seven o'clock under a heavy penalty. Candles are plentiful, and the deprivation was therefore not so seriously felt. Powder has, however, been made in large quantities.

There is here a volunteer ambulance for "the Army of the Rhine," in charge of Dr. Le Fort. It has eight fourgons, four surgeons, twelve aides, and twelve sous-aides. They are located opposite the Prefecture, and have been of immense service to the French army in the field. At Colombey, on the 15th of August, the fourgons were in the Prussian head-quarters during the armistice, and took away seventy wounded officers. Of sick there are altogether about 20,000 soldiers, and about 9,000 wounded. The latter have chiefly been wounded in the sorties. Of the wounded in the battles of Courcelles and Gravelotte most are either recovered or dead. Very many mutilated men

are to be seen in the streets. Latterly almost every operation has ended fatally. Pyæmia, hospital gangrene, and typhus have had their sway on frames previously debilitated by hardship and famine. Of hospital stores I cannot learn that there is any serious lack, except in the matter of leeches. For two of these Dr. Ward yesterday paid 180 francs. His colleague was down with brain-fever, and he paid this wildly fancy price to save his life.

I enclose a copy of to-day's *L'Indépendant*, which will enable you to judge of the state of feeling here. The antipathy seems chiefly directed against Bazaine, and also against Coffinière, who was in command of the fortress of Metz. Coffinière's son, by the way, was shot the other day by the Prussians, he having been taken prisoner in a sortie fighting while under parole. Two or three newspapers continue to be daily printed in Metz. Since no outside information has reached the town for so long, the newspapers have chiefly concerned themselves with local gossip, hopes, fears, and canards. A file of one of them is a curious sight. The stock of paper has run out long since, and the journals have been printed one day on red paper, another on blue, a third on buff, and so on—advertisement placard paper having necessarily been had resort to. One journal is now printed on brown packing paper. The siege guns from Metz will, in some part, be used for the reduction of Thionville, which may be expected now very shortly. Others will be used against Verdun.

All this afternoon, since four o'clock, the division of General Kummer has been pouring into the town, with bands playing and colours flying. The great Landwehrmen stared around them with undisguised curiosity at the nut which they have found so hard to crack. The townsfolk jabbered among themselves as the troops defiled, and there were not a few scowling faces. What cared the Landwehrmen for the scowling faces? From the slush and mire of Maizières and Ladonchamps they had come into a reasonable prospect of beds and bottles of wine. They are quartered for the most part in the Caserne du Génie, the Hôtel de Ville, and other public buildings. The officers are in private houses. How they are devoting themselves to champagne in the *salle* of the hotel! Generals, lieutenants, *vice-feldwebels*, all in the lump are here, and one and all speaking, *more Prussico*, at the top of their voices—the din is deafening. The French officers have gone off to bed, all save two, who are sitting moodily in a corner, pulling their moustaches and drinking absinthe—the poison that has sapped the virility of the French army.

This morning I learn that some officious patriot had been busy

during the night with the statue of Marshal Fabert in the Place d'Armes here. When capitulation was talked of a few days ago, a wreath of immortelles and laurel was placed round his head, and a flag stuck in his hand. This morning the Marshal appeared draped in a full suit of crape, with a hole in it, through which was visible the inscription—the words which the gallant Marshal addressed to Louis XIV.:—

Si pour empêcher qu'une place
Que le Roi m'a confiée
Ne tombât au pouvoir de l'ennemi,
Il fallait mettre à la brèche
Ma personne, ma famille, et tout mon bien,
Je ne balancerais pas un moment à le faire.

Bazaine, under the circumstances, is, I think, to be excused for not acting up to the programme chalked out by the stanch old Marshal.

October 31.—I was, after all, disappointed in getting off my letter of the 29th yesterday morning. The gates were open all night, and it is only about seven miles to Courcelles. I left my hotel at 6 A.M., in reasonable expectancy of being able to reach Courcelles in time for the train leaving for Saarbruck at 8.15. Retribution fell upon me for giving myself up to Sybaritism for once. I rode inside the carriage instead of outside on the box, and the consequence was that the driver, obeying the natural idiosyncrasy of his species, drifted into the wrong road. I first became aware of this unpleasant fact by the hesitating manner in which he sent his machine along, and in putting the question to the man he owned that he was all abroad. Trying to work as the crow flies, we presently became involved in a labyrinth of entrenchments, stockades, and felled trees, and ultimately came to a dead standstill right in the heart of the wood of Colombey. Further progress now with the vehicle was utterly impossible, and there was nothing for it but to make a bee-line for Courcelles on foot. Although I ran most of the way I did not arrive in time for the regular train, and there was no other passenger or post train till the afternoon. But I did not do so bad after all. Dropping in upon Baron Kramm at the lazarette dépôt, I found hobnobbing with this worthy man the Princes of Reuss and Leuchtenburg. The former was going down to Saarbruck by a prisoner's train, which was leaving at 10 A.M., and he kindly undertook to take my letter and telegram. I trust that "Henry 18th"—the Princes of Reuss, you must know, are all labelled Henry, and numbered consecutively—duly fulfilled the commission which he undertook, and that my communication reached England without any great delay. On my way from Colombey to Cour-

celles my track lay through the prisoner-bivouac of the 2nd French Army Corps (Froissard's). It was a very miserable scene. The fires of the previous night had burnt out, and the morning fires had not been lit. The miserable prisoners lounged about in seeming utter despair, the fine rain wetting them through and through, and keeping soft the mud with which their coats were plastered. Some few had erected tents, but the great mass had spent the night in the open, standing round the fires, for to lie down must have been impracticable. If it was any consolation to the prisoners, their Prussian guards were in as miserable a plight as their captives. The chain of sentries posted all round slouched backward and forward on their posts, and the fixed "corporal-schafts" leaned gloomily on their weapons. In the road in front of Ars Laquenexy a kind of market had been established, but the dealers had hardly waked up under the tilts of the carts. They were *marketenders* chiefly from the German frontier about Saarlouis, and the bulk of their wares consisted of spirituous liquor. The French prisoners are by no means short of money. All the cash in the bank here was disbursed in paying the troops up to the middle of this month, and there are plenty of francs in their pockets.

When I was at Courcelles, I saw the arrival of the first column of prisoners to be sent down by the train to Saarbruck. There were 2,000 of them, and five trains, each containing the same number, are being despatched every day. Poor fellows, they seemed very miserable, but they bore their misery with a fortitude which filled me with respect. The rain poured down upon them in a deluge as they stood in the road, which was a foot deep in mud, of the consistency of pea soup. Here they had to wait for about an hour, while the arrangements for their transit were being completed, and it was good to see the courtesy and quiet fortitude which they manifested. I went among them in the mud. Everywhere the poor fellows stepped aside with a half-bow to let me pass. If one accidentally jostled me, the "Pardon, Monsieur," was prompt and warm. I found these French prisoners here as ignorant as those whom I had seen at Sedan. Some of the sergeants asked me for news of the outer world, but the men seemed chiefly concerned to know whither they were going, and what kind of country Germany was. I named several towns as among their probable destination, leading cities of Germany, but very few had more than heard of them, and knew nothing either of their magnitude or of their locality. At last the train was ready, some sixty carriages packed as closely as the men could sit or stand. Several open trucks had been brought

into requisition, and it seemed to me as though the men were actually stacked upon them, so thickly were they packed. With a whistle the heavy train sluggishly set itself in motion, and away it rolled with its freight of Frenchmen down what was once one of the most charming valleys in France. The Frenchmen were prisoners on their way to expatriation; the valley is a wilderness: on the ramparts of St. Quentin, which from a distance overlooked the scene, paced the square-built men with the brass-spiked helmets. The virgin fortress of France, never till now profaned by the foot of an invader, is held by the Landwehrmen, and the streets of the town echo to the clash of the Prussian subaltern's sword.

The people of Metz seem to me morally stunned. They are not in terror of the Prussian soldiers, while they have sufficient comprehension of the situation not to manifest any animosity which they may feel. The men stalk about the streets, stopping to gaze on the Prussian columns as they tramp past with their brisk quick step, and then resuming their moody walk with a muttered "Mon Dieu!" After nightfall yesterday there was a good deal of disorder in the lower parts of the town. The streets still swarm with French prisoners, and they are not by any means careful of the rights of *meum* and *tuum* in fitting themselves out for their pilgrimage into captivity. A woman appealed to me last night to interpose for the prevention of the forcible abduction of her horse by a French under-officer, who, in a state of semi-intoxication, had got on his back and insisted on carrying it off. The Prussian gendarmes patrol the town, interfering as little as they can help, but firm and prompt when they do interfere. The turbulent prisoner very soon found himself no longer an equestrian.

As I drove out yesterday morning across the glacis of Fort Belle Croix, I was struck by the alteration which had taken place there since the previous day. Then the whole expanse swarmed with life. Cavalrymen, artillerymen, infantrymen, were blended in chaotic confusion, out of which it seemed impossible to evolve order. Now the expanse lay blank and bare. Cavalrymen, artillerymen, infantrymen had been drafted off it. Nothing was left but the mud and a few horses, too debilitated to be removed, and dropping, even as I passed, into the slush out of which they should never rise. There was, by the way, a horse-market in Metz yesterday, or rather just outside the gate. I imagine a good many horses changed hands to which the parties who disposed of them would have had some difficulty in proving a valid title. Prices ranged from a franc and a half up to five pounds, but this latter was a fancy price, and only given for an officer's charger of

breeding and substance. After seeing the prisoners' trains leave Courcelles, I drove away northward, my coachman having come drifting down to the station two hours after my arrival; and after visiting the head-quarter Staff of the 7th Army Corps at Puche, and my friends of the 4th Regiment at Retonfay, went into the lager of Lebœuf's corps on the slope between Château-Gras and Retonfay. It was getting towards evening by this time, and I was in the right time for seeing the Frenchmen making their preparations for bivouac. What splendid fellows they are, to be sure, at this kind of work! Already the tents had had a drain through each to carry off the surface water. The great poplar trees on the *chaussée*—those that the Prussians had left standing—were falling fast. Those that the Prussians had felled the Frenchmen were chopping up into lengths, and carrying off to the bivouac fire. Others stood round the bivouac fires or lay on curious improvised beds, contrived with dexterously-placed stones to keep their constructors out of the mud. In the blaze of the fires were pots and saucepans. Rather than part from a saucepan when he has once secured it, I believe a French soldier would lose one of his boots. The pots and saucepans were simmering merrily, and emitting a fragrant odour; whence it was derived I could not guess. The rations had been meat and biscuit; nothing else save salt. The men had dug up again the already thrice-turned-over potato fields, and might have got a few tubers. But potatoes, and meat, and biscuits are impotent to create the pleasant odour. There was a flavour of onions in the scent, and a *souppçon* of garlic, and a whiff as of game besides, that made one's mouth water. Perhaps the latter was attributable to the horse, of which I saw several prisoners carrying out large portions from their Metz bivouacs.

The atmosphere is full of stories of the prices paid in Metz during the siege for articles of food. Most of these are to be taken *cum grano*, since the beleaguered, now that it is all over, not unnaturally take a pleasure in painting their sufferings in the blackest colours. But the one which I am going to narrate I have from an undeniable source, and I give it as illustrative of the profligate frivolity among the wealthier and more aristocratic officers which has been one of the chief causes of the ruin of the French army. There has been here during the siege a certain lady of the Parisian *demi-monde*, who came to Metz when the Emperor came, and could not get away when he retired *viâ* Verdun to Châlons. Two officers of the Garde Impériale have been rivals for this lady's affections. The lady, it seems, has a fanciful and delicate appetite, and one day in the early part of the present month she expressed a fervent

wish to be regaled on turkey and truffles. "Ah, you know that is an impossibility," was the rejoinder of one of the swains. "I don't know that," said the other, eager for an opening; "I shall try what I can do." The other, in his jealousy, offered to bet 500 francs that he would not succeed, and the wager was accepted. The officer came to the landlord of one of the hotels and gave him the commission, adding that money was no object. The head-waiter went on a foraging expedition, and after two days' search brought the officer a turkey and truffles, with a little bill for a thousand francs; so the gay guardsman won his bet and lost 500 francs.

As I was driving out to Courcelles this morning my coachman quietly told me that his wife and three children were starving. When we returned at night I went with him to ascertain the circumstances for myself. He guided me into a part of the town close to the middle branch of the Moselle, inhabited only by the poorest of the poor. I had before then only been on the top of the crust which overlies the misery caused by this siege. I had dined and eaten dessert; I had called for wine, and it was forthcoming. So far as concerned the hotels, the world seemed to wag very much as usual. I saw no ghastly faces in the streets, pallid with want, as were the faces of those citizens of Antwerp who cheered the lean Stadtholder when he swore to eat his boots before he would surrender. But it was not because there are no pale faces and attenuated forms in Metz that I did not see them in the streets, but because the miserable ones care not to make a parade of their misery. It was a sorry sight the squalid room of the coachman presented. Of bread the family had not had a morsel for three days, then they had received as ration two pounds for six. One of the six, an infant two years old, wants rations no more. The little body lay on two planks under the window, the victim of bodily exhaustion, from deficient and improper food. How can a child of two years survive on sinewy horseflesh, in scanty quantity, and on a casual morsel of bread, the meal of which is mixed with sawdust and chopped straw to make it eke out? All up and down the poverty-stricken street the wretchedness was much the same. Horseflesh and want of salt had killed off the children like flies. The mortality among the little ones has been frightful. The elder children are covered with blotches and scorbutic sores, caused by want of salt and of variety in their food. As regards the inhabitants of Metz itself, the misery will soon come to an end. There is no want of wealth in Metz, and the rich citizens are public-spirited. Now that food can be bought, it will be bought and distributed

freely. But let me once again call attention to the wretchedness—a wretchedness almost without hope—of the villagers inhabiting the country around Metz. They have nothing—not even a roof above them, in this pitiless rain. Of their cottages nought stands but the bare walls, often pounded with shells. Their gardens are waste, their cattle are gone, their furniture is wrecked, their straw is dung, their fields are fallow and studded with graves. Seed-corn! What boots it to talk of seed-corn when the food for to-day is not? By the end of this week every village will be a nest of typhus fever. By the time that the winter is over, if something is not done, there will not be many left to catch typhus or any other fever. The French officers are in great force in Metz; but there are many who have declined the offer of parole, and are going to Germany as prisoners with their troops. The reason which they allege for refusing the proffered indulgence is, that their civilian countrymen do not understand the system, and if they should return to their homes, and, in obedience to their promise, refuse again to take up arms, they would be branded as cowards, and indeed seem to apprehend that a worse thing might befall them. I saw General Coffinière in the Hôtel de l'Europe this morning—a truly aldermanic-looking elderly man, with a grey moustache and a heavy jowl. The Metz paper, *L'Indépendant*—a copy of which I sent you on the 29th—has been suppressed by the Prussian authorities. The copy I sent you was the last issued. This morning the tone of the Metz press is extremely guarded, and no more of the journals will be interfered with so long as they behave themselves.

The army is highly gratified by the fact that the King has raised Prince Frederick Charles to the rank of a Field Marshal. He comes into the town this afternoon, entering quietly through the Porte Serpenoise, going first to visit the fortifications of the Porte Chambière and the Polygon, and then riding out to Fort St. Julien. A goodly proportion of his Staff have already come clattering into the Hôtel de l'Europe—princes, counts and “vons,” in all the varieties of swell cavalry uniforms. The Prince goes to-day or to-morrow for a few days' change, his health being far from restored after his attack of dysentery. Some of his Staff go with him, but the administration of the Second Army remains at Corny. The 7th Army Corps remains in the meantime in the vicinity of Metz, as well as Kummer's division inside. General Manteuffel yesterday quitted Ste. Barbe for Jouy, and assumed the command of the First Army, commanded in the early part of the war by that excellent officer General Steinmetz, who has been much maligned.

This First Army, under his command, marches in a few days in the direction of Lille; the Second Army, remaining under Prince Frederick Charles, will proceed later towards Besançon. The prisoners from the western side of the Moselle are being drafted across the river daily into the camps on this side nearest to Courcelles, so that the latter, although being depleted daily, will be kept at their present strength till all have been brought across.

Accounts of an affair which took place in the neighbourhood of Mercy-le-Haut on Monday last have, it is understood, been transmitted to England, of a tenor calculated to give an erroneous idea of what really occurred. Under a flag of truce, a column of peasants came out from the vicinity of Metz, and it is understood representations have been made that the women and children were deliberately fired upon by the soldiers of a regiment of the 7th Army Corps, under orders from a superior officer. I have been officially requested to explain the facts of the case, and I give them as officially communicated to me. The column of peasants did make its appearance under a flag of truce and in great strength. As starvation was the weapon on which the Prussians were relying, it would have been in the teeth of their policy to allow of this exodus, which would *pro tanto* weaken this weapon. The poor people, therefore, were ordered to fall back and return. They disobeyed the orders, and continued to advance. The troops fell back before them in utter bewilderment as to the means of stopping them, while a message was sent for instructions. These were to the effect that shots should be fired to intimidate the people, care being taken to aim wide. Even this had no effect. A male peasant was in the front with a flag of truce in his hand, and waving on his convoy. He was repeatedly warned of the risk he ran, but the man appeared to be drunk, and refused to relinquish his purpose. Hard on his heels followed a woman maddened with drink, who also brandished a white flag, and yelled to those behind her to come on. When all other efforts had been tried, and failed, a shot was fired at the leader, who fell wounded, and his following then turned about and made their return towards Metz unmolested. This I am told is the unvarnished tale.

Yesterday a convoy of 300 generals and superior officers went off at five o'clock. To-day, at 10.30, a train left for Mayence, *viâ* Nancy, for the accommodation of generals and chief Staff officers. To-morrow a regular series of trains will start for Saarbrück, containing officers. The first, leaving at 9.30, accommodates the officers of the garrison; the second at 1.30, for the officers of the Imperial Guard, cavalry of the reserve,

and Engineers. At 1.30 the officers of Canrobert's corps (the 6th), and division of Forton. At 4.15 a train takes off the officers of the 2nd Corps (Froissard's), and the Brigade Lapasset; and at 6.15 the 3rd Corps (Lebœuf's). Great consideration is being shown by the Prussian authorities for the officers, and careful arrangements are being made for the wounded and sick French, chiefly under the supervision of Prussian doctors.

His Excellency von Kummer has had to give the Metz people a caution in his own grim way. When the first of the Prussian troops came in on the 28th, some of the hotter-blooded civilians fell upon them with knives, and wounded one or two, who were brought down to one of the ambulances, where I saw their wounds dressed. General Kummer has posted a proclamation informing the inhabitants that death will inevitably be the portion of any one who lifts his hand against a Prussian soldier, or who steals anything from him, harbours a spy, or does anything contrary to the interests of the Prussian army. At the same time, he announces that scrupulous regard will be paid to private property in the town and vicinity, and to enforce orders patrols of gendarmes are pacing the streets. I may give you the exact official number of efficient in the besieging army—168,000. The prisoners, as I have already stated, number 173,000.

I have spent this afternoon in inspecting, so far as is in my power, the fortifications of the town of Metz, and those constituting its exterior defences. What I have already written in the columns of the *Daily News* concerning the natural and artificial strength of the forts of St. Quentin, St. Julien, Plappeville, St. Eloy, and Queleu has been more than borne out by personal investigation. Whoever holds Metz holds an impregnable fortress. Nothing can so much as get at the fortress of Metz proper while the outworks hold out, and there is no reason that, properly garrisoned and provisioned, they should not hold out for ever. It might be possible to batter down St. Eloy or Queleu; the others cannot be got at advantageously in any way on account of the strength of their natural position. The weak point of the fortress is towards the east, between Queleu and St. Julien; but the complement of the defence on that side is made up by the "provisional" earthwork of Les Bottes. From what I hear, I think it probable that the day after the 14th of August, the Prussians, if they had made a dash, and had been prepared for severe losses, might have effected a lodgment in front of Fort Belle Croix in this direction, and, indeed, if all tales are true, might have pushed their way into the town itself. We all know how

easy it is to be wise after the event. The English army in the Crimea was abused for not going straight into Sebastopol two days after the Alma, instead of sitting down on that bleak plateau over against the fortress. Had its leaders known the state of the fortifications, no doubt that weary winter and those heaps of dead might have been spared to Britain. So with the Prussians here. I am assured that so confident were the French of success—so ridiculous did they think the idea that it was possible to invest Metz—that it was not till after the battle of Forbach that serious efforts were made to place the fortress in an efficient state of defence. The guns were not mounted till then behind the embrasures. Les Bottes was unfinished—a mere heap of shapeless earth. Even now it is not properly finished, and is as slovenly a piece of fortification work as I ever saw put out of hand by troops which assert they have engineers in their ranks. Nevertheless, it has a front, and guns mounted on that front. The Prussians, ever masterful and prompt, will not delay long to alter Les Bottes from a “provisional” into a permanent fort; and, with their efficient and thorough system of administration, Metz, if impregnable hitherto, will be henceforth, if such a thing can be, doubly impregnable.

From what I can learn, there has been a good deal more of huckstering than patriotism among the civilian population of Metz. There was a reason for the *émeute* on the evening of the 28th. The wily burghers had been keeping back their stores for a market, while their poorer fellows hungered because of the high prices, and the army starved. Horses were dying daily for the want of forage; yet the Prussians have found stores of hay and corn quietly stowed away in unlikely places. It is the same with other articles of consumption, and the administration does not seem to have been either strong enough or cunning enough to make everything forthcoming for the common good. Napoleon called us a nation of shopkeepers, but I take leave to doubt whether our shopkeeping idiosyncrasy would have developed itself in such a manner. I cannot help having a quiet chuckle at the *douce* burghers, whose market Bazaine has spoiled. Ye gods, how they hate him for it! From the newspapers I have already sent you, and the one I now enclose, you may be able to judge how venomously this feeling manifests itself. If you listen to all you hear, you must accept the conclusion that Bazaine is a renegade and traitor of the worst possible type. It seems, according to the gossip of the natives, savage that their canny little scheme for putting money in their purses has failed, that Bazaine nourished the design of having himself declared

Regent of France, and that he only relinquished this ambitious project for the consideration of a fabulous subsidy, contributed I cannot exactly learn by whom. It is useless to point out to the angry and disappointed cits that on the face of it this is rubbish, and that Bazaine kept his upper lip straight and his face to the foe so long as, and indeed longer, than he had an army capable of fighting, marching, or standing up to be shot down. When the history of this war comes to be written, the name of Bazaine will have to be inscribed in brighter ink than that of any other French commander. If he had had subordinates capable of co-operating with him, had he been unfettered at the outset, and had the discipline and *morale* of his army not been deteriorated before he took the command of it, it might have been that the chroniclers of this war would have had a different tale to tell.

It was with a deep interest that I listened at the *table d'hôte* this evening to the despondent remarks of a venerable French gentleman, who had been a colonel at Waterloo. The old man had the water in his eyes as he spoke of the depreciation in the character of the forces of his country. The cause that has wrought the curse of deteriorated discipline is, according to him, the pernicious itch for popularity with which all the French superior officers are bitten. Canrobert, he told me, was the great initiator of this popularity-hunting fever. In his rough, bluff way he used familiarly to appeal to the private soldiers as "his children," whether their rations were what they liked, and if an ill-conditioned fellow, thus encouraged, vented a grumble, he would turn on the colonel and blow him up sky-high. One very pregnant observation he made, a remark which I have thought of all the evening, and doubly significant as coming from a Frenchman and an officer. "Surely," said I, "this will bring the French to their senses, and we must have peace in a very short time. And just as surely that peace," I continued, "must be a permanent one, for the French army, with all its craving for *la gloire*, must realize the fact that there is not much in the way of *la gloire* to be got by being greedy for the Rhine."

"I don't know," said the old man, mournfully. "Logically you are right, no doubt; but severe as the lesson has been, I question its effect. It is the officers of the French army who chiefly are the clamourers—senseless and frothy clamourers—after *la gloire*. They shrieked for war, enervated with lust and absinthe as they were, ignorant of their duties, their minds uncultivated, and debilitated with luxury. I fear they are too far gone, too utterly vitiated and emasculated mentally, to be able to draw the conclusion from the premises; and I should

not be surprised if, a year hence, you may hear the parole loafers who are swinging about the streets to-day yelling for war again, as unprepared to pursue it to success as they were when this one was entered into, and as reckless and regardless of consequences as they were then and are now."

Just conceive what France must have come to when one of her *anciens militaires* can speak thus! That the officers of his army are, in his opinion, so utterly spineless as to be unable to recognize the fact that they are beaten, the causes which have led to their defeat, and the utter impossibility that unless they purge and live cleanly they can make even a fair fight of it against the cool-headed and heavy-handed German! The whirligig of time brings round many curious changes, but it is utterly outside the nature of things that Frenchmen as they are, as I see them from day to day, can ever, given what advantages they may, be a match in warfare for a people so constituted as those which dwell in the Vaterland. The hot iron of adversity brands deep, and has a wonderful power to cure ailments, but if the surface is so callous that the iron will not mark, how can the beneficial result be achieved? The old gentleman was specially severe on the Zouaves. When these regiments were first constituted, he said the ranks were really full of fighting men. No one who saw the Zouaves in the Crimea but must endorse this opinion. But as their fame grew they became fashionable, and then their ruin set in. The ranks were crowded with young sprigs who had no other thought than a picturesque uniform, waxed moustaches, the *demi-monde*, and absinthe, and the once stout and capable regiments lost their prowess and became enervated and flaccid. This view may be exaggerated—the *ancien militaire* of the *table d'hôte* was not the first man that ever put forth the opinion that "the service is going to the dogs, by gad!" but it is in a measure confirmed by the events of this war, in which the French infantry of the line has displayed far greater valour and patient endurance than the pet regiments.

The English ambulance, I am happy to state, has reached Metz with promptitude and in a most efficient condition. Five fourgons came in on the 29th, five more yesterday. Since their advent the officials have been assiduously engaged in distributing their stores amongst the lazarettes. The gentlemen of the English ambulance were the first to bring salt to the several hospitals. The chief lack has been in opium, quinine, and surgical instruments. How far the latter want has existed I cannot personally state, not being a medical man, but a surgeon of the International ambulance asserted yesterday, in my hearing, that he had repeatedly performed opera-

tions with a bistoury. I never doubt any gentleman's word, but to cut off a leg with a bistoury seems to be something like blowing up a mountain with a penny cracker.

I have the *carte* of a supper which an officer gave at the Hôtel de l'Europe last week, on the occasion of his receiving a decoration. For a fortress on the eve of surrendering by reason of famine, it must be owned that both the eating and drinking were far from despicable. To quote may amuse your readers. Here it is—Soup à la Julienne, pille, roast beef, roast chicken and salad, horsebrains and cauliflower, hare: dessert, preserves, bon-bons, Rhine wine, château de Pape, champagne, cognac, tea, coffee, Maraschino, cigars.

November 1.—One is surprised, on entering Metz for the first time since the capitulation, how little sickness is apparently existing in the town. One strolls on to the Place Royale, and there he sees the streets of railway waggons, which in the early days were brought into the town from the station—300 of them—and diverted from the carriage of luggage or merchandise to be hospitals for the reception of the sick and wounded. The waggons are there still, it is true, but of sick and wounded there seem very few. Here and there a convalescent limps about on crutches, or a pallid-faced man glides past, from whom you instinctively shrink with a curious feeling that the taint of the fever must be hanging about him still. But of sweeping pestilence there are no traces. One has to look for the deadly sickness in quiet corners in the little impoverished hospitals, where there are only a few cases, or in the neglected villages around the town, where hygiene has been comparatively neglected. There it is, and there alone, where you will find forms which you are told are those of men, but passed out of all recognition as such, discoloured and bloated in the last stages of the foul black small-pox. It may be that you chance on a lazarette into which the terrible demon of hospital gangrene has entered and fixed his relentless fang, never to be withdrawn till the earth has been heaped on his victim. A few cases of this terrible disorder, and only a few, have I seen. I trust no reader of the *Daily News* will ever be called to look upon the corpse of one who has died of pyæmia. One takes his life in his hand when he goes among such spectacles. Here is a house in the Ile de Saulny in which there are five sick men and two corpses. There is a doctor with them—a lone man, for the very women, with their tender hearts steeled by the terror of the dread infection, have run away. The doctor is an American, a mere youth in years, but there is grey already in his hair, and he tells me that the last six weeks have made him feel as an old man. With

every breath he inhales he risks his life nearly as much as if he held his fist into the cage of a cobra capella. What words can describe the colour of these semicomatose forms which he handles so tenderly? Have they been blown up in explosions, and had their skins dusted over to ease the smart of the burn, and to hide the swarthy brand of the powder? No, they are the victims of a far worse misfortune. They lie smitten to the marrow with the terrible *Typhus exanthematicus*, the floury typhus, which is happily so rare that many a respectable and capable general practitioner in Britain has never heard of it. The flour which this fever leaves on the skin of its victim seldom washes off. Almost invariably face and flour-dust are alike hidden in the grave.

The railway station outside the Porte Serpenoise of Metz is a curious sight. It is the dépôt of all the vast train of that Corps-Francis organized by the Chemin de Fer de l'Est, with a military constitution, and having a material that cost fifteen millions of francs. The corps numbered 1,200 men, and they, with all their material, their bridges, their stalls, their waggons, their pontoons, and their vast limber blocks, were destined to act as the pioneers of the French army on its march "à Berlin," and to repair the damage to the communications wrought by the Prussians, falling back beaten and demoralized across the Rhine to their capital. There is a bridge here in pieces, specially constructed to be thrown across the Rhine. The bridge has never quitted the locality where it was constructed. It is the prize of the army that has not only kept the watch fast and true on the German Rhine, but that stands sentry on the Moselle, the Marne, the Seine, and the Loire. And to-day, in the drizzle of the small rain, the bold Corps-Francis are slowly jogging it on the "gefangenzug" towards the Rhine, which they had thought to approach in array so different.

Many a day will it take Metz to recover from the handiwork of the men who undertook to defend it. The tourist who in the early summer came to this virgin queen of the Moselle, might have noticed outside the fortifications a belt of buildings about half an English mile in breadth. The trim villas of the wealthy citizens stood here in the dainty gardens; the pretentious house of the Mayor was here behind its red-brick walls. There were snug little cottages *ornées*, where dwelt ladies about whose antecedents few knew anything, but who had fair faces, and who dressed magnificently. Not one stone remains upon another of all the villas, the mansions, the cottages. All is blank desolation. Here and there the stump of a fountain, erstwhile standing in a pretty garden, asserts itself disconso-

lately, its one superincumbent Cupid or Neptune half battered into the mud. The ground is churned into slush by the tread of many footsteps, and fœtid odours blow over it from the dead horses that are rotting on its surface. This belt of desolation is the *zone militaire* of Metz—the space outside the fortifications, where buildings were allowed to be erected solely on the condition that if it should be necessary at any time for military exigencies to destroy them, the owners should not be entitled to claim compensation. The military exigency came in July last, and now the portly Mayor may bite his thumb, and the owners of the villas and the cottages grope about the ruins for salvage, for no consolation is forthcoming for them in the shape of compensation.

On the south side of Metz all the country is inundated by the overflow of the Moselle. One requires to come out along the railway or by the road to Courcelles to obtain some idea of the strength of Fort Queleu. I had thought it previously a fortification much resembling in its natural features the Fort of St. Eloy. It looks to the observer from the east or south-east as if it stood on a flat. Looking at it from the west, however, one sees that it crowns the summit of a blunt eminence that rises out of a branch of the Moselle, and that on this side it has at once a natural glacis and a natural moat. Immediately outside the *zone militaire* there is a chain of villages which have suffered very little externally, and in which the children play and the women spin. Beyond this again you come upon the wrecks. To the south, for instance, is Peltre, not a house of which has a roof upon it. This was the work of the French themselves. As I drove past it in the dull half-light of the morning, the roofless church stood out through the watery fog, the tracery of its Gothic windows making a ghastly cobweb across the sky.

By the train which left Metz this morning, Marshals Canrobert and Lebœuf went off into Germany. The telegraph-wires will be re-established to Metz this afternoon, and I understand that the office will, from to-day, be open for private as well as official telegrams. The day before yesterday the post was established on a regular footing, and it was a sight to see the crowds who surged around it eager to send letters off to their friends, with whom they have had no communication for so many weeks. I am told that about 30,000 prisoners crossed the Moselle yesterday to the north of Metz, on their way on foot to Saarlouis. The weather is still abominable, and the camps are terribly trying for the prisoners. But they are better off than they were before the capitulation. They receive the same rations that the Prussian soldiers do, and receive them

regularly and punctually. This is what they have not been accustomed to for many a day.

November 2.—Yesterday I continued my investigations into the condition of the French sick, who have been left by the capitulation as a legacy to the Prussians. In these inquiries I have to acknowledge having derived great assistance from the courteous kindness of Dr. Leithold, of the division of General Kummer, on whom has devolved the supervision of all the medical and sanitary arrangements. Dr. Leithold has in all inherited about 19,000 sick men, among whom are included only sixty Prussian prisoners—all the rest are Frenchmen. This includes the sick in the field hospitals and the various forts. The diseases chiefly raging are typhus and dysentery, the latter with a strong tendency to assume the phase of the former. There are not many cases, however, of spotted or floury typhus. Small-pox is far from rare, and in not a few cases it is of the most virulent form. A good deal of scurvy also prevails. I fancy that a great quantity of scurvy cases of a mild type have not been allowed to enter the hospitals, for of the prisoners in the "Lazer" by Retonfay I have seen a considerable number bearing the evidences of suffering from this disease. With the good and varied rations now being distributed, a disease which has been superinduced by their absence will soon disappear. The hospital stores of which, as Dr. Leithold tells me, there is now most want in Metz are febrifugal drugs, tonics, especially quinine, and disinfectants. In order at once to clear for the occupation of troops the barracks in Metz, hitherto used as hospitals, and to provide a change into higher and purer air, all the sick who are able to move are being sent out into the high-lying forts surrounding the town. This step, it is hoped, will stimulate healthy action in systems that have become low, degenerate, and stagnant. Good nourishment, which is being provided with a lavish hand, will co-operate greatly in the setting-up of this healthy action. His Excellency Von Kummer deserves to be held in high honour for the prompt and solicitous arrangements which he instituted for relieving the condition of the sick. A great bakery of white bread was at once set up in the Caserne des Chasseurs, and orders were circulated that all medical officers in charge of lazarettes should have *carte blanche* to make requisitions for bread. Stores of coffee, chocolate, soup, extract and other comforts were speedily obtained, and by Sunday morning there were very few sick who were not the better for the advent of the Prussians. Prior to the establishment of the regular system of supply, the Berliner Hülfsverein, represented by MM. Adolph Schwabe and E. Minlos, was the first to com-

mence a distribution of comforts. I understand there is what in the circumstances I take leave to call an unworthy and trumpery feeling of jealousy on the part of some representatives of the different voluntary organizations, and it seems the credit of having been "first in" is claimed very freely, and with no very scrupulous regard to facts, by all and sundry without exception. This is not the only trivial feeling that intervenes to prevent the harmonious working of all the organizations which the charity of nations has been so frank and liberal to promote. I have heard of the chief of an ambulance—I do not wish to be personal, and therefore I reserve the name—who abused the representative of the ambulance in Remilly, because, recognizing the imminent urgency of the position, he had come into Metz the moment he could, and with what fourgons he had, instead of waiting for the arrival of additional carriages and stores from the rear. The view of the chief was, that this hurried action of the subordinate prevented the possibility of instituting a pompous procession, which could not have failed to have had an imposing effect at once on the Prussian troops and the inhabitants of Metz. I wonder whether the subscribers intended their money to be applied towards imposing processions, or towards relieving the sick at the earliest opportunity? But since the question of precedence has arisen, it may be as well that it should be decided, and I am in a position to do so. The Berliner Hülfsverein was the first in Metz. Its almoners and carriages came in with the Staff of General Kummer, and before he came in there was no admission for any but exceptionally favoured individuals. I have not learned that any civilian, except myself, got into Metz before late in the afternoon of the 29th. Britons may be glad to know that they, too, helped towards the Liebesgaben, with which were packed the fourgons of the Berliner Hülfsverein, since the British National Society helped its funds with a donation of £1,000, the administration of which was confided to Mr. Schwabe. As General Kummer and his Staff came through the town a scene occurred, pathetic enough in one aspect to move the deepest sympathies of those who love the Fatherland and its children, and yet not without a certain grotesqueness that only affords another illustration of the narrow gap which exists between tears and laughter. As the General rode down the Rue de la Prison Militaire, he passed the prison of the Maison d'Arrêt, where the Prussian prisoners taken on the 7th at Mézières were confined. As the Landwehrmen on that day had met the foe with shouts "Hurrah Preussen!" and "Immer vorwärts!" so now, gaunt, hollow-eyed, and squalid, the gallant fellows cheered their

countrymen as they came on. The cheer was hardly so full-volumed as when it echoed through the gables of Ladon-champs; scanty rations, exclusively of horseflesh, are not quite the class of feeding off which to cheer lustily. But Kummer, not unfamiliar with the cheers of his Landwehrmen, heard the "Hurrah Preussen!" from behind the bars, and, halting, called out to his "Kinder" to know how they fared. The hungry men told their plight, and the General, turning to the Intendant who rode behind him, asked when he could have food up for the wants of the prisoned Landwehrmen. "Not for an hour at least," was the reply. Then Kummer applied to Mr. Schwäbe, the bearer of the Liebesgaben, and asked whether he could do nothing till the Intendant got up his column. The fourgons of the Berliner Hülfsverein were not a furlong behind, and they came up at the trot. The bread was tumbled out of the waggons, and in at the prison-windows. But the waggons contained other provender than bread, and the question was asked of the prisoners as they munched their bread, what "kitchen" they would have to it. Who that knows the Prussian palate but can anticipate the reply. "Haben Sie Wurst?" was the response, as if from one man, and then from behind came a piping voice—it must have been an epicurean boy who spoke—"Oder Schinken?" *Wurst* is the German sausage, suggestive to the British mind of trichinæ and other nameless horrors, but dearer to the Prussian heart than any other edible. Then the prisoners got cigars; and Kummer and the Berliner Hülfsverein passed on, the former to take the command of the city, the latter to distribute their arrowroot, tea, woollen garments, winter beds, biscuits, and what not of Liebesgaben, to the wretched French sick.

On returning to the Hôtel de l'Europe, after a round of the hospitals, I found in the *salle* an officer from Retonfay, who had ridden in to tell me that the General in command of the brigade had sent to desire me to call upon him. I like calling on generals very well if I go of my own accord, but a summons to attend is apt to make one nervous. Had I been writing of the positions without sufficient discretion, I anxiously asked of myself? or had any order been issued to forbid correspondents from frequenting the foreposts? Speculation was useless, and I went straight out in the moonlight to the château inhabited by the General, in the outskirts of Retonfay. There was no frown on the features of the gallant old Pole; my portion was a warm grip of the hand, and a cordial salutation. The General, instead of having a scolding for me, wished to ask a favour of the *Daily News*. The General's children are

half English, his wife is an English lady, and his mother-in-law, who, to judge from the enthusiastic manner in which the General spoke of her, is utterly unlike the typical mother-in-law, had thoughtfully sent her fighting son-in-law a box of concentrated soups all the way from a western suburb of London. The gift had moved the General to tender thanks, if he might, through the columns of the *Daily News*, and to make of the box of soups a peg on which to hang a compliment to the British nation. The General pondered, as he ate his soup, on the form which this communication should take, apologizing to me for his silence from the circumstance that he desired "to make a little wit." When he had got to the salad, he found the spirit move him, and he dictated as follows:—"I thank you, dear grandmamma, for your delicious soups; the vermicelli and the tail ox are delicious. The North German Ambassador has made a mistake when he said that the English nation has only manifested a warm-heartedness towards the French. As I eat my dinner I am a witness to the contrary.—Your loving son, Von Zglinitzki, Major-General." The good General slightly distorts, you will observe, the relation existing between himself and the relative he desires to address; but I suppose he has taken the word from the children. Anyhow, as the only representative of the *Daily News* on the foreposts, I made a copy of the General's epistle of thanks, and by his desire have embodied it in my letter.

After leaving him I rode across country to Courcelles to see how my good friend the Baron von Kramm was getting on with his depôt of love-gifts from the Fatherland, now that Metz is taken and he may quit the post to which, in the midst of every discomfort, he has clung so stanchly for three months. The Baron is going to transfer his depôt into Metz, and then he goes home. I hope not without the Iron Cross upon his breast, for no man deserves it more. It was midnight ere, in his pleasant society, it occurred to me it was time to go back to Metz. Looking out of window to see what sort of night it was, I noticed a train standing at the station. A train to Metz at midnight! How could this be? I must go and ask. As I came up through the mire, among the *marketender* stalls, I encountered a hungry rush, and stood aside to let it pass. It did not pass, it fell upon the *marketenders* and figuratively swamped them. As it broke and crumbled, I recognized among the waifs it had left an English M.P. not unknown as an able speaker from the Liberal benches, and also as an author whose latest work gained high praise from the reviewers. He was the master of a vast hunk of dry brown bread, which

he was swallowing with greater assiduity than ever he devoured a blue-book. Had the Kitchen Committee seen him during the dull interregnum of the dinner-hour how they would have laughed! That train had left Saarbruck at six, and had been at Courcelles nearly two hours. It only just became known as I came to the station that food of any kind could be procured, and the rush I had seen was the consequence. I accompanied my compatriot to Metz, leaving my servant to bring on my horse in the morning. When we reached the Metz station we thought we should have to remain in it till morning. It was one vast prison bivouac of Frenchmen, many of whom were sick. They littered the platform and the rails so that one could not move without treading on them, sleeping in all manner of grotesque attitudes. And the whiffs of typhus that rose from the squalid forms in some places made me thankful that I had a cigar in my mouth. I have an opportunity of sending this letter off at once by the prisoners' train, and so I must close.

November 3.—Marshal Bazaine went off the other day to Nancy and thence by train to Germany. He was in Nancy on Sunday, and required an escort of Prussian cavalry to save him from the violence of the mob. Had they dared, the good folks of Metz would have lynched him rather than let him go. You already know that they insulted him at the station on his departure. They followed his *cortège* to the station, and when they were asked what they wanted, they, with a fierce yell of hate, cried—"Nous sommes venus ici pour cracher à la figure de Bazaine." This was not the only overt evidence of the deadly hate which the populace of Metz bore to the Marshal. The morning after I entered I noticed more than one dead wall scratched in chalk with the words—"Bazaine and Coffinière traitors and cowards."

Yesterday the whole of the 10th Army Corps defiled through Metz on its southward march towards Troyes. Its General, Voigts Rhetz, sat in the saddle in the Place Royale, with Kummer beside him, and a back ground formed of the trucks devoted to hospital purposes. On the other side of the broad thoroughfare stood groups of French officers looking on critically as the men went past with whom they had so often been engaged. To have seen the different regiments pass the saluting-point, with everything about them as neat as if they had come out of barracks, you would never have thought they could have been doing forepost work and fighting for six weeks. Fresh, stout, clean, and supple, the great stalwart fellows came past with the Prussian quick-step in one long continuous stream for two hours, and long before all had

passed the Frenchmen had sunk into a dull silence that seemed to betoken acquiescence in an inevitable fate. There was no cheering or singing, the bands played as they passed the General; but the Prussian does not insult a fallen foe, and the "Wacht am Rhein" was kept for the country roads. General Kummer, during his brief tenure of a very difficult and delicate office, has earned a well-deserved popularity. His urbanity and consideration to the French officers have been appreciated warmly by them all, and not a few of them have referred to the subject in my hearing with deep feeling. It may not be generally known that when the report of the capitulation became spread abroad throughout the army on the evening of the 28th ult., a great number of regimental officers had a sort of caucus meeting, in which they discussed the matter. Universal indignation at the conduct of Bazaine was expressed, and it having been estimated that the officers present were able to rely on the fidelity of a following of some 25,000 men, it was resolved that a desperate effort should be made that same night to cut a way through the Prussian lines. The meeting separated, and one of its members came to the Hôtel del'Europe, where, over a bottle of champagne, he made his last will and testament, and, with a tear in his eye, committed it to his friend my informant, and went forth with set teeth on his desperate enterprise. Next morning he came back to breakfast, blithe as a bird, and reclaimed his will. It seemed there had been a miscalculation. Instead of the following of 25,000 men on which the officers had relied, they could not get a man to follow them. The realization of the misconception prevented the attempt being made.

With the exercise of not a little diplomacy I have to-day obtained what I reckon one of the most interesting souvenirs of this war, in the shape of files of the Metz journals *L'Indépendant* and *Le Vœu National* for the months of August, September, and October. These are great curiosities, were it only for the divers colours of the papers on which they are printed. I forward them by this post. The editor of *L'Indépendant*, who, I may remark, was so great a regarder of the *camaraderie* of the press as to insist on my acceptance of his file as a present, although he had refused the day before to sell it at any price, is an ultra-patriot, and therefore I accepted what he told me with a considerable grain of salt. On questions of fact, however, I had no right to doubt his word. Coffinière, he told me, exercised a most rigid censorship over the press, and cut out uniformly for a month before the capitulation every article calculated to give offence to the Prussians, or of a tenor to fan the flame of resistance. The editor also asserts that

there was food enough in Metz to support the population for a considerable time longer, and evidenced as a proof that the troops need not have been at starvation point, that the forts were full of provisions. Of this latter fact there can be no doubt. I have myself inspected the provision stores in Fort St. Quentin, and found them capable of maintaining a garrison adequate for the defence of the fort for months at least. But I don't see that any deduction is to be drawn from this that Bazaine has proved false to his trust. His policy is explicable enough, viewed in a military light. His cue evidently from the first has been to keep the fortress so as to be able to maintain its resistance. He has made effort after effort to get his army out, and his penultimate proffer to Prince Frederick Charles was to surrender the army and allow the fortress to stand. When this was rejected what good purpose could it have answered to deplete the forts to enable the army to hold out a little longer in its fruitless efforts? Thus far on military grounds no one can blame him; but that he has let men starve while he had food anywhere that he could give them, constitutes a very grave moral responsibility. One of the chief of the Prussian medical staff has just told me that, do what he will, he cannot break the French convalescents of their craving for horseflesh. They will eat it, notwithstanding that they are receiving abundant rations of mutton. It is curious that the taste should have so grown upon them. The doctors oppose their eating horseflesh because they think that an entire change of diet will operate as much as anything in effecting a cure.

Yesterday was All Souls' Day, and high mass was celebrated in the splendid old cathedral. A number of Prussian soldiers were present, chiefly of the Rhenish regiments, in which there are many Catholics, and they mingled with a curiously picturesque effect among the French prisoners and the civilian population. When mass was over and the Roman Catholics had gone their ways, an Evangelical chaplain belonging to Kummer's division took possession of the pulpit, and held what the Scotch call a "diet" of public worship for the behoof of the Protestants. The Catholic townsfolk did not at all like this, which they designated profanation, but for many a day there has not been such a congregation in the noble edifice as that which gathered from the Landwehr division to hear the sermon from their chaplain. After service I strolled on to the adjacent market-place, and was the auditor of a little conversation which it may be worth while to relate, since feathers show how the wind blows. Old Applewoman—" *Sacré!* these accursed Prussians are everywhere. They look as if they had

been in Metz for ages." Second old Applewoman—"Ah, take courage, my friend, Russia is arming to aid France." Third Old Applewoman—"Yes, and it is notorious that Saxony is itching to side with us." Sententious middle-aged Corporal, with his head bandaged up—"Don't deceive yourselves, good ladies. The game is up. We had to yield to these terrible, irresistible Prussians. As we, so Paris. When the pinch comes, Paris will have to drop her arms, as we have done. The nation is beaten, and we had better accept the position."

I never tire of passing my time in watching the Place Royale and the Esplanade, on which are quartered the wounded. On the former are the railway-car hospitals, on the latter are fine roomy tents, holding twelve men each comfortably. What a variety of mutilations you notice among the convalescents! Men who have lost a leg, others a foot, others an arm; the gamut of mutilation is run up and down till you almost expect to see a man walking about without a head. It is a listless, weary promenade which these unfortunates execute. Some few form little groups for conversation, and others make belief to play at a kind of out-door billiards on a wooden frame on the ground, but most patrol languidly backwards and forwards, with a dejected listlessness that is the more painful to witness because it is so un-French-like. I suppose they must have been tired of the promenade at the top of the esplanade over against the river, for there are seldom more than a few there. And yet the view from it is one of which I think it must take a long time to get weary. If I could think the inhabitants of the esplanade possessed of so much depth of feeling, I would fain imagine that they shun the promenade on the ramparts, because the sight of so much of beauty lost to France would wound them too poignantly. Behind, among the tents, are the statues, and the still bright flower-beds. In front, at one's feet, are the outworks, and then the broad stream of the river, with the fertile meadows of St. Simphorien beyond. On the right, across the stream, is the Ile Saule, the island of the weeping willows, with its powder-magazines all but hidden among the graceful willows and the tall poplars. On the left is the citadel, with its green earthworks and glacis, and beyond, the beautiful suburb of Montigny, with the bend of the stream farther on ending in the railway bridge, the horizon to the south bounded by the range of heights, of which the highest is Mont St. Blaise, with its ruined château and the Observatory, from which I looked down on the plain and city ten days ago. No wonder that my prospect was a good one: as one looks up from the esplanade at Mont St. Blaise, it seems as if from it one could see through the windows into

the houses of Metz. Over St. Simphorien is the other branch of the Moselle, fringed by the nestling villages of Moulin, St. Ruffine, Ban St. Martin, and Devant-les-Ponts, wearing a very peaceful aspect, but for the absence of smoke from the chimneys. Over them towers abruptly the rugged Mont St. Quentin, with the vineyards on its shoulders, lovingly hugging the white villages, then the bare interval of red scarp, and then the summit, crowned by the great spreading fortress, its warm-grey tint brought out in the slanting sunbeams. Well may St. Quentin be called "The eagle of Metz," soaring over the valley, as it does, up in the very sky. Alas! for France and Metz, the wings of the eagle are shorn. On its ramparts there is an eagle still, it is true, but it is the eagle on the helmet of the Prussian sentry, who, as he pauses in his beat and looks down on what till last week deserved the name its inhabitants so fondly give it, "La Pucelle," may be trying how he can adapt the German song "Oh Strasburg, oh Strasburg, du wunderschön stadt," to the new conquest. Verily, it is a wonderful city—a city for the possession of which to stake everything, and to fight to the last man and the last ditch! Now that the army has seen it—few who have not studied him know what an instinctive eye the German soldier has for the beauties of Nature—he would not be a discreet man who should suggest that the prize should be let slip. Nothing has so much strengthened Bismarck's hand in his demand for Lorraine as the opportunity the army has obtained of seeing and admiring Metz.

CHAPTER XIII.

M. JULES FAVRE's journey to Ferrières, and his interview with Count Bismarck, had not the effect of delaying or diverting for a single day the march of the great host which was advancing to invest Paris. The gates of the city were closed on the 19th of September, the German corps destined to guard the roads on the side of St. Germain took up their positions on the 21st, and thenceforth Paris was completely shut in. For days before the last approaches to the western outlet were closed, the railway stations had been blocked by crowds of men and women, with vans containing children and luggage, and at the last moment many persons had to escape leaving their property exposed to all the accidents of the siege. Left to itself, Paris was far from yielding to those feelings which would have been only natural in the isolated condition of the city. The discovery

was soon made that Paris was itself a world. The sustaining reflection, moreover, was presented by journalists, poets, and orators without number, that the whole outer world was thinking only of Paris. "Let the streets of the town devour the enemy," wrote M. Victor Hugo; "let the tombs cry out; let flames spring everywhere from the earth; let every tuft of grass be as the burning bush; let it be felt that, behind each heart there is the people and God; let us organize the terrible battle of our country. As for Europe, she can look on." Days passed on and the Germans had done no more than repulse some slight attacks of outposts, and then it was remembered that if to transport an army of 250,000 men to Paris was a difficult task, the transport of a siege train adequate to the reduction of a system of fortifications, the round of which could not be made in a journey of less than twenty-six miles, was an undertaking of still greater magnitude. The first business of the Germans, after securing all the avenues and exits of the capital—a work which they accomplished so well that without their leave it was not possible to send a message out of Paris, except by a balloon—was to secure provisions, and for this purpose small corps of infantry, cavalry, and artillery were organized, which spread themselves over the country for a distance of fifty miles, and made enormous requisitions of cattle, corn, and forage. In Paris, the eloquent narrative in which M. Jules Favre had described the failure of his negotiations, and the sternness with which Count Bismarck demanded the surrender of French territory, produced a profound impression, and prepared the citizens to make great efforts and sacrifices. Before the battle of Sedan the attention of General Trochu had been directed to the weak points in the system of permanent fortifications, which, constructed before science had shown the capabilities of rifled steel guns with elongated projectiles, were far from perfect, and several new works were undertaken at various points in order to give completeness and solidity to the defence. These were unfinished when the Germans arrived before Paris, and some of them it was necessary to abandon. Others, however, were within the protection of the permanent forts, and were finished, while lines of earthworks were thrown up in the intervals of the forts, and armed with powerful guns. More important, however, than all material preparations were the measures taken to place the largest possible number of men in a position to repel the enemy, should he attack, or to go forth to expel him should his presence be prolonged before the capital. Count Bismarck had declared, in a pointed manner:—"We shall enter Paris without attacking it; we shall starve it out." It began to look as if such were indeed the deliberate intention of the enemy. The King of Prussia, following the Crown Prince, his son, had

taken up his quarters, and was making himself at home at Versailles, and a Prussian Prefect of the Seine issued orders and gave audiences. Unless Paris were deliberately to resign herself to extreme suffering and ultimate surrender, a real army must be created, capable of advancing beyond the forts and assailing the enemy. The Government made such good use of its time, that by the first week in October, according to a declaration published by M. Gambetta, Minister of the Interior, 400,000 National Guards were armed, 100,000 Gardes Mobiles, including 80,000 from the departments, were in the capital, and with them were 60,000 regular troops. It was much to have brought together so large a force for the internal defence of the capital. The army of Paris was twice (perhaps it was three times) as large as that which the Germans had placed before the capital. But it was, by the admission of General Trochu, greatly deficient in organization and discipline, and almost entirely without field artillery. The National Guard was doubtless animated by the most ardent patriotism, but its composition did not fit it for the duties of an active field force. It was evident that something more must be done than raise an Army of Paris if the capital was to be saved. At first it had been hoped that the departments, seeing Paris invested, would fly to its succour. But the departments at first showed no enthusiasm for such an enterprise. Lyons and Marseilles, which had proclaimed the Republic without waiting for instructions from any one, regarded Paris as a sister city, and not as the indispensable head of France. In the rural districts the Republic was viewed with distrust. The excursions of the Prussian Uhlans, followed by the inevitable requisition column, had roused several departments to military action, but their efforts were directed to the protection of the neighbourhood immediately menaced; and at Paris it began to be complained that the defence of the country was being localized.

It was in these circumstances that M. Gambetta suddenly descended from the clouds near Amiens, on the 8th of October, and summoned France to "make a pact with victory or death." M. Gambetta had left Paris in a balloon the day before, taking with him, besides his secretary, a carrier pigeon, which was to return to the capital with intelligence of the issue of his adventure. From Amiens M. Gambetta went to Rouen, and thence to Tours, which was his destination. Three members of the Government—MM. Crémieux, Glais-Bizoin, and Admiral Fournichon—had gone to Tours, just before Paris was invested, in the character of a Delegated Government; but they had done little but demonstrate their own incompetence. M. Gambetta's arrival was the beginning of a new state of things. He at once assumed unbounded authority, exercising dictatorial powers without re-

ference to Paris, and made his vigorous influence felt in every department within his authority. The lively audacity of his proclamations, especially when he sought to efface some national disaster by proclaiming an incredible and wholly imaginary success, astonished even those who had been accustomed to the steady phlegmatic affirmations and denials of Count Palikao. For a week after the fall of Metz the population of Tours was in the highest spirits, believing, on M. Gambetta's assurance, that the affairs of the country had taken a new and happy turn. But while M. Gambetta thus sustained the hope of his countrymen, his real reliance was based on measures dictated by patriotism and guided by good sense. He gave France armies, cannon, rifles; he gave her, what was better still, an example and a hope. He deposed veteran generals who had proved inefficient, and promised reward everywhere to those who could show merits bearing the seal of success. Under the impulsion of his energy, battalions became brigades, brigades divisions, and divisions armies; until at length France had once more a force which was the pure creation of patriotism, and which, if inexperienced, was at least not corrupted by the evil education of Africa, or demoralized by the retreats of the Imperial campaign.

During the first few weeks of the investment General Trochu steadfastly resisted the demands of the extreme Republicans that a great sortie should be made from Paris, and merely made a few reconnaissances, in which his young troops learned to stand under fire, and which, not being pushed beyond prudent limits, gave them the self-confidence they so much required. As the Germans neither made any attack on the forts, nor threw projectiles into Paris, the people of the capital resigned themselves to an attitude of expectation, and as far as circumstances permitted returned to their old ways of life. The moods and aspects of Paris at this period were described from time to time, as opportunities of sending correspondence arose, in the letters of a "Besieged Resident," of which the following are extracts:—

September 19.—As my messenger to the post-office could get no authentic intelligence about what was passing, I went there myself. Everybody was in military uniform, everybody was shrugging his shoulders, and everybody was in the condition of a London policeman who should see himself marched off to the station by a street-sweeper. That the Prussians should have taken the Emperor prisoner, and have vanquished the French armies, had, of course, astonished these worthy bureaucrats, but that they should have ventured to interfere with postmen had perfectly dumbfounded them. "Put your letter in that box," said a venerable employé on a high stool. "Will

it ever be taken out?" I asked. "Qui sait?" he replied. "Shall you send off a train to-morrow morning?" I asked. There was a chorus of "Qui sait?" and the heads disappeared still farther with the respective shoulders to which they belonged. "What do you think of a man on horseback?" I suggested. An indignant "Impossible!" was the answer. "Why not?" I asked. The look of contempt with which the clerks gazed on me was expressive. It meant, "Do you really imagine that a functionary—a postman—is going to forward your letters in an irregular manner?" At this moment a sort of young French Jefferson Brick came in. Evidently he was a Republican recently set in authority. To him I turned. "Citizen," I said, "I want my letter to go to London. It is a Press letter. These bureaucrats say that they do not dare send it out by a horse express; I appeal to you, as I am sure you are a man of expedients." "These people," he replied, scowling at the clerks, "are demoralized. They are the ancient valets of a corrupt Court: give me your letter; if possible it shall go, 'foi de citoyen.'" I handed my letter to Jefferson, but whether it is on its way to England, or still in his patriotic hands, I do not know. As I passed out through the courtyard I saw postmen seated on the boxes of carts, with no horses before them. It was their hour to carry out the letters, and thus mechanically they fulfilled their duty. English Government officials have before now been jeered at as men of routine, but the most ancient clerk in Somerset House is a man of wild impulse and boundless expedient compared with the average of functionaries, great and small, here. The want of "shiftiness" is a national characteristic. The French are like a flock of sheep without shepherds or sheep-dogs. Soldiers and civilians have no idea of anything except doing what they are ordered to do by some functionary. Let one wheel in an administration get out of order, and everything goes wrong. After my visit to the post-office I went to the central telegraph office, and sent you a telegram. The clerk was very surly at first, but he said that he thought a Press telegram would pass the wires. When I paid him he became friendly. My own impression is that my twelve francs, whoever they may benefit, will not benefit the British public.

Nothing in the papers this morning. In the *Figaro* an article from that old humbug, Villemessant. From some safe hole in the provinces he calls upon his fellow-citizens in Paris to resist to the death. "One thing Frenchmen never forgive," he says—"cowardice." The *Gaulois* contains the most news. It represents the Prussians to be all round Paris. At Versailles they have converted the Palace into a barrack. Their camp

fires were seen last night in the forest of Bondy. Uhlans have made their appearance at St. Cloud. "Fritz" has taken up his quarters at Ferrières, the château of Baron Rothschild. "William"—we are very familiar when we speak of the Prussian Royal family—is still at Meaux. "No thunderbolt," adds the correspondent, "has yet fallen on him." The Prussian outposts are at the distance of three kilometres from St. Denis. Near Vitry shots have been heard. In the environs of Vincennes there has been fighting. It appears that the General who was arrested yesterday was General Ambert. He was reviewing some regiments of Nationales, and when they cried "Vive la République" he told them that the Republic did not exist. The men immediately surrounded him, and carried him to the Ministry of the Interior, where I presume he still is.

The butler of a friend of mine, whose house is close by the fortifications, and who has left it in charge, has just been to see me. The house is a "poste" of the National Guard. Butler says the men do not sleep on the ramparts, but in the neighbouring houses. They are changed every twenty-four hours. He had rather a hard time of it last night with a company from the Faubourg St. Antoine. As a rule, however, he says they are decent, orderly men. They complain very much that their business is going to rack and ruin: when they are away from their shops, they say, impecunious patriots come in to purchase goods of their wives, and promise to call another day to pay for them. On Saturday night the butler reports 300 National Guards were drawn up before his master's house, and twenty-five volunteers were demanded for a service of danger. After some time the twenty-five stepped forward, but having heard for what they were wanted, eighteen declined to go. A British coachman who has just turned up, offers to carry letters through. He seems a sharp plucky fellow, and I shall employ him as soon as the post-office is definitely closed. British coachman does not think much of the citizen soldiers in Paris. "Lor' bless you, sir! I'd rather have 10,000 Englishmen than the lot of them. In my stable I make my men obey me, but these chaps they don't seem to care what their hofferers says to them." The Breton Mobiles are making pilgrimages to the churches. I hear the *curés* of Paris have divided the ramparts between them, and are on the fortifications—bravo! *curés*. By the bye, that fire-eater, Paul de Cassagnac, has not followed the example of his brother Imperial journalists. He enlisted as a Zouave, fought well, and was taken prisoner at Sedan. He is now employed by his captors in making bread. I hope his bread will be better than his articles.

I have been sitting with a friend who commands a company of National Guards. Friend tells me that a large number of National Guards have run away from Paris, and that those who remain are very indignant with them. He requests me to beg my countrymen, if they see a sturdy Monsieur swelling it down Regent Street, to kick him, as he ought to be defending his country. I fulfil his request with the greatest pleasure, and endorse it. At the Embassy this morning I found Wodehouse sitting like Patience on a stool, with a number of Britons round him, who wanted to get off out of Paris. Wodehouse very justly told them that Lord Lyons had given them due notice to leave, and that they had chosen at their own risk to remain. The Britons seemed to imagine that their Embassy was bound to find them a road by which they might safely withdraw from the town. One very important Briton was most indignant—"I am a man of wealth and position. I am not accustomed to be treated in this manner. What is the use of you, sir, if you cannot ensure my safe passage to England? If I am killed the world shall ring with it. I shall myself make a formal complaint to Lord Granville," said this incoherent and pompous donkey. Exit man of position, fuming; enter unprotected female. Of course she was a widow, of course she had lost half a dozen sons, of course she kept lodgings, and of course she wanted her "hambassader" generally to take her under his wing. I left Wodehouse explaining to her that if she went out of Paris even with a pass, she might or might not be shot, according to circumstances. I will say for him that I should not be as patient as he is, were I worried and badgered by the hour by a crowd of shrieking women and silly men.

September 22.—Yesterday afternoon we "manifested" against peace. We "manifest" by going, if we are in the National Guard, with bouquets at the ends of our muskets to deposit a crown of *immortelles* before the statue of Strasburg. If we are unarmed, we walk behind a drum to the statue and sing the "Marseillaise." At the statue there is generally some orator on a stool holding forth. We occasionally applaud him, but we never listen to him. After this we go to the Place before the Hôtel de Ville, and we shout, "Point de paix!" We then march down the Boulevards, and go home satisfied that we have deserved well of our country. As yesterday was the anniversary of the proclamation of the First Republic, we were in a very "manifesting" mood. M. Gambetta issued proclamations every half-hour, calling upon us, in more or less flowery language, to die for our country. M. Arago, the Mayor, followed suit, heading his manifestoes with the old rallying cry,

"Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité." I suppose the French are so constituted that they really cannot exist without processions, bouquets to statues, and grand phrases. Notwithstanding all this humbug, a large portion of them mean, I am sure, to fight it out. They have taken it into their heads that Paris can be successfully defended, and if it is not, they are determined that it shall not be their fault. It is intended, I understand, to keep well beneath the cover of the forts, not to risk engagements more than is necessary—gradually to convert the splendid raw material of the Mobiles into good soldiers, by accustoming them to be under fire, and then, if things go well, to fall on one or other of the Prussian armies. It is hoped, too, that the Prussian communications will be menaced. Such is the plan, and every one pretends to believe that it will succeed; whether they are right or wrong time will show.

Of course I cannot be expected to give aid and comfort to our besiegers by telling them, if they seize this letter, what is being done inside to keep them out. But this, I think, it will do them no harm to know. The National Guard mans the ramparts. In the angles of the bastions there are Mobiles. At points close by the ramparts there are reserves of Mobiles and National Guards, ready at a moment's notice, both by day and night, to reinforce them. In the centre of the town there are reserves under arms. Outside the gates, between the forts and the ramparts, troops are massed with artillery, and the forts are well garrisoned. A gentleman who has lately been under a cloud, as he was the inventor of the Orsini bombs, has several thousand men at work on infernal machines. This magician assures me that within a week he will destroy the German armies as completely as were the Assyrians who besieged Jerusalem under Sennacherib. He is an enthusiast, but an excellent chemist, and I really have hopes that he will before long astonish our friends outside.

It is amusing to observe how every one has entered into the conspiracy to persuade the world that the French nation never desired war; to hear them, one would suppose that the Rhine had never been called the national frontier of France, and that the war had been entered into by Badinguet, as they style the late Emperor, against the wishes of the army, the peasantry, and the bourgeoisie. Poor old Badinguet has enough to answer for already, but even sensible Frenchmen have persuaded themselves that he, and he alone, is responsible for the war. He is absolutely loathed here. I sometimes suggest to some Gaul that he may possibly be back again here, some day; the Gaul immediately rolls his eyes, clenches his fists, and swears that if ever he returns to Paris he will himself shoot him.

September 25. (Sunday).—They could stand it no longer; the afternoon was too fine. Stern patriotism unbent, and tragic severity of demeanour was forgotten. The Champs Elysées and the Avenue de la Grande Armée were full of people. Monsieur shone by his absence; he was at the ramparts, or was supposed to be there; but his wife, his children, his *bonne*, and his kitchen-wench issued forth, oblivious alike of dull care and of bombarding Prussians, to enjoy themselves after their wont by gossiping and lolling in the sun. The Strasburg fetish had its usual crowd of admirers. Every bench in the Champs Elysées was occupied. Guitars twanged, organs were ground, merry-go-rounds were in full swing, and had it not been that here and there some regiment was drilling, one would have supposed oneself in some country fair. There were but few men; no fine toilets, no private carriages. It was a sort of Greenwich Park. At the Arc de Triomphe was a crowd trying to discover what was going on upon the heights above Argenteuil. Some declared they saw Prussians, while others with opera glasses declared that the supposed Prussians were only trees. In the Avenue de l'Impératrice was a large crowd gazing upon the Fort of Mont Valérien. This fort, because I presume it is the strongest for defence, is the favourite of the Parisians. They love it as a sailor loves his ship. "If I were near enough," said a girl near me, "I would kiss it." "Let me carry your kiss to it," replied a Mobile, and the pair embraced, amid the cheers of the people round them. At Auteuil there were *fiacres* full of sight-seers, come to watch the Prussian batteries at Meudon, which could be distinctly seen. Occasionally, too, there came a puff of smoke from one of the gunboats lying below Pont du Jour.

September 26.—Do the Prussians really mean to starve us out? We have a bread and a meat maximum, but to force a butcher to sell you a cutlet at the tariff price, one has to go with a corporal's guard, which cannot always be procured. The *Gazette Officielle* contains a decree regulating the sale of horseflesh. I presume, if the siege lasts long enough, dogs, rats, and cats will be tarified. I have got 1,000f. with me. It is impossible to draw upon England, consequently I see a moment coming when, unless rats are reasonable, I shall not be able to afford myself the luxury of one oftener than once a week. When I am at the end of my 1,000f. I shall become an advocate for Felix Pyat's public tables, at which, as far as I understand his plan, those who have money pay, and those who have not, eat. How is it all to end? In a given time the Parisians will eat themselves out and fire themselves out. The credulity of the public is as great as ever. We are told that "France is rising, and

that in a few weeks three armies will throw themselves on the Prussians, who are already utterly disorganized." In vain I ask, "But what if these three armies do not make their appearance?" I am regarded as an idiot for venturing to discredit a notorious fact. If I dared, I would venture to suggest to some of my warlike friends, that a town which simply defends itself by shutting its gates, firing into space, and waiting for apocryphal armies, is not acting a very heroic part.

The Mobiles, who receive 1 franc 50 centimes a day, complain that they are unable to support themselves on this pittance. The conduct of these peasants is above all praise. Physically and morally they are greatly the superiors of the ordinary run of Parisians. They are quiet, orderly, and, as a rule, even devout. Yesterday I went into the Madeleine, where some service was going on. It was full of Mobiles listening to the prayers of the priest. The Breton regiments are accompanied by their priests, who bless them before they go on duty. If the Parisians were not so thoroughly conceited, one might hope that the presence of these villagers would have a beneficial effect upon them, and show them that the Frenchmen out of Paris are worth more than those within it. The generation of Parisians which has arrived at manhood during the existence of the Empire is, perhaps, the most contemptible that the world has ever seen. If one of these worthies is rich enough, his dream has been to keep a mistress in splendour; if this has been above his means, he has attempted to hang on to some wealthy *vaurien*. The number of persons without available means who somehow managed to live on the fat of the land without ever doing a single day's honest work, had become enormous. Most of them have, on some pretext or other, sneaked out of Paris. One sees now very few ribbons of the Legion of Honour, notwithstanding the reckless profusion with which this order was lavished; the Emperor's flock, marked with the red streak, have disappeared.

September 30.—I went this morning into a shop, the proprietor of which, a bootmaker, I have long known, and I listened with interest to the conversation of this worthy man with some of his neighbours who had dropped in to have a gossip, and to congratulate him on his martial achievements, as he had been on guard in a bastion. We first discussed why the Army of the Loire had not arrived, and we came to the conclusion that it was engaged in rallying Bazaine. "I should like to read your English newspapers now," said one; "your *Times* told us we ought to cede Alsace and Lorraine, its editor must now acknowledge that Paris is now invincible." I told him that I felt

convinced that he did so regularly every morning. "No peace," shouted a little tailor, who had been prancing about on an imaginary steed, killing imaginary Prussians; "we have made a pact with death; the world knows now what are the consequences of attacking us." The all-absorbing question of subsistence then came up, and some one remarked that beef would give out sooner than mutton. "We must learn," observed a jolly-looking grocer, "to vanquish the prejudices of our stomach. Even those who do not like mutton must make the sacrifice of their taste to their country." I mildly suggested that perhaps in a few weeks the stomachs which had a prejudice against rats would have to overcome it. At this the countenances of the gossips fell considerably, when the bootmaker, after mysteriously closing the door, whispered, "A secret was confided to me this morning by an intimate friend of General Trochu. There is a tunnel which connects Paris with the provinces, and through it flocks and herds are entering the town." This news cheered us up amazingly. My bootmaker's wife came in to help him off with his military accoutrements; so, with a compliment about Venus disarming Mars, I withdrew in company with an American, who had gone into the shop with me. This American is a sort of transatlantic Bunsby. He talks little, but thinks much. His sole observation to me as we walked away was this, "They will squat, sir; mark my words, they will squat." I received this oracular utterance with respect, and I leave it to others to solve its meaning. I am myself a person of singular credulity, but even I sometimes ask myself whether all I hear and read can be true. Was there really, as all the newspapers this morning inform me, a meeting last Sunday in London of 400,000 persons, who were addressed by eminent M.P.'s, and by the principal merchants and owners of manufactories in England, at which resolutions were adopted denouncing the Queen, and calling upon Mr. Gladstone either to retire from office or to declare war against Prussia?

October 10.—Having nothing particularly to boast of to-day, the newspapers request the world to be good enough to turn its eyes upon Gambetta traversing space in a balloon. A nation whose Minister is capable of this heroic feat must eventually drive the enemy from its soil. The *Figaro*, in fact, hints that in all probability peace will be signed at Berlin at no very distant date. The *Gaulois*, a comparatively sensible newspaper, thus deals with this aerial voyage:—"As the balloon passed above the Prussian armies, amid the clouds and the birds, the old William probably turned to Bismarck, and asked, 'What is that black point in the sky?' 'It is a Minister,' replied

Bismarck; 'it is the heroic Gambetta, on his way to the Loire. In Paris he named prefects; on the Loire he will assemble battalions.' Favourable winds wafted the balloon on her course; perhaps Gambetta landed at Cahors, his natal town, perhaps somewhere else—perhaps in the arms of Crémieux, that aged lion. To-morrow the provinces will resound with his voice, which will mingle with the rattling of arms and the sound of drums. Like a trumpet, it will peal along the Loire, inflaming hearts, forming battalions, and causing the manes of St. Just and Desmoulins to rise from their graves."

November 14.—The ration of fresh meat is now reduced in almost all the arrondissements to 30 grammes a head. There is no difficulty, however, in obtaining for money any quantity of it in the restaurants. In the bouillons only one portion is served to each customer. Cats have risen in the market—a good fat one now costs 10 francs. Those that remain are exceedingly wild. These sagacious animals seem to have remarked a murderous intention in the eyes of their former friends. This morning I had a *salmis* of rats—it was excellent—something between frog and rabbit. I breakfasted with the correspondents of two of your contemporaries. One of them, after a certain amount of hesitation, allowed me to help him to a leg of a rat; after eating it he was as anxious as a terrier for more. The latter, however, scornfully refused to share in the repast. As he got through his portion of salted horse, which rejoiced in the name of beef, he regarded us with horror and disgust. I remember, when I was in Egypt, that my feelings towards the natives were of a somewhat similar nature when I saw them eating rat. The older one grows the more tolerant one becomes. If ever I am again in Paris I shall eat the national dish whenever I get a chance. During the siege of Londonderry rats sold for 7s. each, and if this siege goes on many weeks longer, the utmost which a person of moderate means will be able to allow himself will be an occasional mouse. I was curious to see whether the proprietor of the restaurant would boldly call rat, rat in my bill. His heart failed him—it figures as a *salmi* of game.

While Paris was thus helpless, in the departments fortress after fortress was falling. The capitulations of Soissons, Verdun, Schelestadt, and Neu Breisach were followed by those of Toul, Strasburg, and Metz. The troops set at liberty by the earliest among these surrenders were sent southwards under General Werder, to keep in check the forces which were gathering at Besançon and Lyons, in order to march against the communications of the German army near the Vosges. General Werder

did not advance beyond Dijon, where, however, in a position of observation, his army did excellent service. It was to this part of France that General Garibaldi was sent by M. Gambetta, immediately on his arrival to offer his sword to the Republic. The General's operations did not at once satisfy the expectations which his arrival had raised. Differences arose between him and the neighbouring French commanders; and he himself appears to have expected to have a regularly organized army corps at once placed at his disposal rather than to be left to make the most of a miscellaneous assemblage of irregular troops. The infirm state of his health, moreover, disqualified him for the fatigues of partisan warfare. His sons, however, were with him, and his presence inspired in others the enthusiasm which prompts to daring deeds. The first blow which informed the Germans in that part of France that an active enemy was near them was struck by Ricciotti Garibaldi, under the circumstances described in the following letter, dated—

Montbard, Côte d'Or, November 20.—On leaving Semur by diligence this afternoon we passed through a long range of hills which bounds the town on the northern side. The road then passes through a country where one sees scarcely any trees but poplars and willow-stumps. Apple and pear trees, however, in many places grow beside the road, but the vine is only cultivated in little batches, few and far between. Heifers had been turned out to grass, and were browsing along with the cows, tended by children in the different pasture-fields with which the country abounds. But we had left far behind us the poultry, donkeys, and the long-legged, lean-looking pigs, which seem to be the principal farm produce in the country which lies between Autun and Saulieu. It was Sunday. At the different villages through which we passed the peasantry swarmed in the streets—the men in their Sunday hats and blouses, and the women in clean white caps. Many had left their houses and were gathered in groups along the high road, awaiting the arrival of the Prussian prisoners. On reaching the town of Montbard, the road passes through the railway bridge, parallel with which is the canal running at the foot of a little hill, from the crown of which, out of the midst of a wood of fir-trees, rises the tower of the Château of Montbard, better known as the Château of Buffon, where the celebrated naturalist composed all his works.

We reached Montbard at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and found at the very entrance the streets lined with the National Guard, behind whom were a compact crowd waiting to see the prisoners pass on their way to Semur. The diligence

set me down at the entrance to the town, and elbowing my way through the crowd as best I could, I at once proceeded to Colonel Ricciotti's head-quarters. He had been breakfasting at the Hôtel de la Poste with the commanders of the different companies of Franks-tireurs, and was somewhat surprised to see me. After introducing me to his companions, he exclaimed in French—"These journalists beat everything I ever saw. I hardly thought the news could have reached Autun, and here's a reporter, whom I thought with my father, ready to take everything down." While we were talking over the events of the previous day an officer came to say that the prisoners were about to leave for Semur. I therefore went down to have a look at them. They were all in carts, at the bottom of which was a quantity of straw, and were escorted by the National Guards of Semur, who marched on either side. As I foresaw in my letter of yesterday evening, and that of this afternoon, dated from Semur, the information respecting the fighting at Châtillon was very much exaggerated, but the affair was, notwithstanding, both brilliant and clever, and every praise is due to the gallant young colonel, who, although the youngest in our army, has nevertheless made the first stroke, and a very daring one it was. Here is the account of the action which he has just handed me:—

On the 17th he was at Saulieu, and while there received information that 800 Germans, belonging to the 7th Army Corps, 11th Division, 27th Infantry Brigade, and 3rd Landwehr Regiment, were quartered at Châtillon, which lies at about thirty kilometres from here, and eighty kilometres N.W. of Dijon, on the road to Troyes. Ricciotti, who had with him 560 men, immediately ordered a forced march to Montbard, forty-two kilometres distant. He reached this place during the night, and the following morning set out for Culmier-le-Sec, where he arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon. At Culmier-le-Sec he rested his men, and at one o'clock in the morning he marched towards Châtillon. At 5.30 A.M. he arrived within a few hundred yards of the town, and immediately divided his troops into two corps, one being sent to make an attack on the western side, on the road to Tonnerre, while the other attacked on the southern side. Eighty men—the Franks-tireurs of the Haute Savoie—were then despatched to surround the Hôtel de la Côte d'Or, where Colonel Ricciotti knew the Staff officers were lodged. The attack was commenced by surprising the enemy's foreposts and the sentinels. A little before six o'clock in the morning the Colonel entered the town at the head of his troops, and fighting then commenced. The war-cry was "Garibaldi! Garibaldi!" Almost all the German soldiers were

in bed, so that an immense number were made prisoners in the houses, the doors of which were forced open. The remainder rushed out only half dressed, with whatever arms they managed to lay their hands on, and as they appeared in the street were shot down. In the meanwhile the *Francs-tireurs* of the Haute Savoie had surrounded the Hôtel de la Côte d'Or, and surprised the officers in bed. The greater portion of them were made prisoners, but several desperately defended themselves, and were killed. Shortly after Ricciotti and his men entered Châtillon couriers on horseback were despatched by the enemy in the directions of Chaumont and Laignes.

After thirty minutes' fighting a considerable number of the enemy abandoned the town, escaping along the high road towards Chaumont. The remainder, who had recovered from their surprise, concentrated themselves in the Town Hall, which Colonel Ricciotti decided on not attacking, the enemy holding a tolerably strong position, and he not wishing to lose men, his force being small. Besides, news came that 4,000 Prussians were at Laignes, and 1,400 on the road between Chaumont and Châtillon, and it was feared that reinforcements would arrive before the Town Hall could be captured.

I should mention here that of the 560 men who marched with Ricciotti from Saulieu, 150 had been sent out reconnoitring, so that in reality he made the attack with only 410 men, while the enemy numbered 800.

After holding the town for precisely one hour and a quarter, news came to the effect that the German troops, already signalled on the road from Chaumont to Châtillon, were only $5\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres distant. Colonel Ricciotti at once ordered a retreat, which was executed in the most perfect order, the *Francs-tireurs* carrying along with them 167 prisoners, among whom were eleven officers, as well as sixty-two horses, four carriages, saddles, and harness; arms, such as sabres, revolvers, and needle-gun rifles; a quantity of ammunition, several cases of German cigars, and boxes of papers and letters belonging to the Staff. The enemy's losses in killed and wounded are calculated at more than 100, among whom two colonels and two majors were killed: one of the colonels was the German prefect of the town. From the state of his helmet it would seem that he had been shot right through the head, for the back shows distinctly the place where the ball came out. Our losses were three killed and twelve wounded, but one of these is very dangerously hurt, and not likely to live for more than a few hours.

The good fortune of the Garibaldians was, however, soon to

suffer a check. The Special Correspondent with Garibaldi wrote from Autun, on the 28th of November :—

At Somberum, at eight o'clock in the evening, I was awakened by very disagreeable news. General Bosak and his troops had been attacked by the enemy in the course of the morning; he had been abandoned by the Mobile Guard, who fled without firing a shot, and the General had been consequently forced to retreat with something like eighty men, who remained with him. Thinking it extremely likely that Ricciotti's brigade might be called up, I had my horse saddled, and went to Pont-Pagnier, where I arrived just as Colonel Ricciotti received an order to move forward with his brigade to Lantenay, 10 kilometres from Pont-Pagnier, and about 23 from Dijon. We set out at the appointed hour along a road across the hills, and reached Lantenay early in the morning. The village of Lantenay is very small—450 inhabitants; so that a large portion of the troops had had to pass the night in the fields round camp-fires. On arriving at head-quarters, which were in an old château on the hill, I learnt that the General and his Staff were out reconnoitring. I went out into the street, and found Major Erbe, of the Tanara Legion, on horseback. The Major told me that all the troops were being set in motion. Although I had not eaten since twelve o'clock on the previous day, this was no moment to think of breakfasting. With the leg of a turkey in one hand and a piece of bread in the other, I mounted my horse and galloped up the hill without asking for any further information. When I reached the plain on the summit of the hill behind Lantenay, the troops were coming up the road. At 12.30 they had all arrived, and were drawn up at the side of the wood. From the plateau we could distinguish the enemy plainly enough drawn up on the rising ground immediately behind the village of Prenois. From a battery on the hills behind us, beyond the valley of Ouche, the enemy were firing—evidently a feint to attract our attention from the movement in the direction of Prenois. I had ridden out to two mounted scouts who were observing the enemy's movements from the extremity of the plain. Suddenly on the left of the village we saw two or three black spots on the horizon. We at first took them for scouts, who had been sent out to reconnoitre, but a minute or two afterwards they changed into a black mass two or three inches long. This was evidently a German column advancing. We waited for a few minutes until we saw the black line getting bigger and bigger, and I then rode back with the scouts to inform the General. Garibaldi was breakfasting. He immediately mounted his

horse and proceeded to draw up his troops in line of battle.

The artillery was placed on rising ground on the left. Francs-tireurs were sent into the wood on the right, and the column ordered to advance. The Garibaldians of the Tanara Legion were, I believe, on the left, the Francs-tireurs on the right, the Genoese in the centre, and the Mobile Guard behind. I was so far in front with the Staff, which moved about all day between the skirmishers and the bulk of the army, that it was impossible to distinguish the different uniforms of the troops. Our batteries opened fire a little after one, and were answered by the Germans from the rising ground behind Prenoio. The German cannon-balls whistled over our heads, but did us very little harm, and our right wing continued to advance in excellent order. Presently an aide-de-camp was despatched to the rear, to order an advance on all the line. At this moment the General and his Staff were on the right, a considerable distance in front. Turning back a few minutes afterwards to see if the order had been executed, he exclaimed, "*Cela fait plaisir* to see an army of the Republic advancing like that." At about a quarter to two the enemy fired a few howitzer-shells, none of which, however, reached us. Suddenly the General, who had been watching the German column through a field-glass, turned to his Staff, and exclaimed, "They are retreating!" and then, calling the captain of the 7th Chasseurs d'Afrique, he said, "Go and see if you cannot pick up a few stragglers." We had now advanced to the verge of the first hollow, and from the high ground above we had an admirable view of the charge below. The cavalry, thirty-nine in number, accompanied by Colonel Canzio, Garibaldi's son-in-law, and Captain Tironi, galloped after the enemy, who were running away over the high ground beyond Prenoio. To get at them, however, it was necessary to pass by a wall close to the village, and behind this the Germans had placed twenty or thirty men to protect their retreat. When the cavalry had arrived to within a few yards of the wall, they were received with three volleys of musketry. Not one of them turned back. They merely changed their course, and galloped up to the wall. Unfortunately it was too high for the horses to jump, and while they turned to get round at the other side the Germans behind it managed to escape. The most extraordinary thing was that the discharges only killed eight horses and wounded three men. A few minutes later the Garibaldians, led by Colonel Tanara and Major Erbe, entered Prenoio, and were received with loud and repeated cries of "*Vivent les Garibaldiens!*"

Five minutes afterwards we were far ahead, galloping by the few dead bodies that were scattered here and there over the

battle-field. We were now on the verge of a second hollow. Before us was the last high ground, which seemed to run perfectly horizontal from west to east. Before us, on the left, was a second village, and on our right a wood, extending to the top of the rising ground, bordered the hollow. The Germans were evidently getting away as fast as they could, for we saw nothing more of them. But, with the *sang-froid* which is characteristic of a well-disciplined army, they defended the ground, and covered their retreat on every favourable occasion. Our left, which was a long way ahead, stopped while our right, backed up by the Mobile Guard, was ordered to advance along the side of the wood to prevent the enemy from attacking us in that direction, for, as we could not see the road they had taken, we were undecided as to whether they had turned to the right or gone straight ahead. Presently, however, we saw that they had established a battery on the high ground before us, which opened a rapid fire upon our advancing columns. Nothing, however, stopped our advance; our cannon answered theirs from the incline on the opposite side of the hollow, and after ten minutes' firing we saw their artillery make off. When we reached the top of the rising ground we found ourselves upon the road from Paris to Dijon, where we waited while the remainder of the troops came up. It was now raining hard. The General, who had been on horseback all day, was tired, the more so as his horse had fallen with him early in the afternoon. A carriage was procured at a neighbouring house. The General, accompanied by Colonel Canzio, got into it, and, surrounded by the officers of his Staff, placed himself at the head of the column. Three spies, dressed as peasants, were then sent forward with instructions to tell the enemy that we were advancing along the road in force with cavalry and artillery. We gave them a quarter of an hour to get ahead, and the column was then set in motion, a few cavalry scouts being sent in front, and the General and his Staff at the head of the column. We had marched for about ten minutes without seeing or hearing anything of the enemy, when we came to the spot where the road to Dijon turns to the right. Five hundred yards farther on the General's carriage drew up on the right-hand side of the road, and the advanced guard was sent forward. It was now quite dark, the sky was as black as coal, but not far ahead on the left we saw the light which rose from Dijon, and illuminated the sky above. The advanced guard had been gone about five minutes, other troops had followed, when suddenly the reports of two needle-guns were heard. These were followed by several others, and we then knew that our advanced guard had reached the Prussian out-

posts. The order given to the troops had been, "Do not fire; use your bayonets, and we shall sleep at Dijon to-night." Hardly two or three minutes after the first discharge there came a regular shower of bullets, which whistled about our ears in a most unpleasant fashion. The only thing that surprises me is that two-thirds were not killed. The General's carriage was beside the high road, surrounded by the officers of his Staff, and yet by the most miraculous chance not one was killed, or even hurt. "It's getting hot," said an officer beside me. He had hardly uttered the last word when there came a second shower of lead, and then a third. This time we all leant over our horses' necks. Fortunately for us the Prussian fire was very high, and consequently almost all the balls passed over our heads. Several of my companions, however, had their kepis grazed and their cloaks pierced. Colonel Bordone's horse got a ball in its nose, but no one was wounded. Our troops continued to advance. In front were the Italians, the Chasseurs des Alpes, and several other companies of Francs-tireurs. Presently we found ourselves almost alone beside the road. Ahead we still heard the burr of the mitrailleuses, but none of the balls reached us. It was evident from this that the enemy's batteries had retreated. Immediately behind us were our two batteries of artillery, and behind them the remainder of our troops. An aide-de-camp was sent to bring them up, and as after two or three minutes no one appeared on the scene of action, a second was despatched. I accompanied the third, to see what was the matter. On arriving at the end of our line of artillery we found the Mobile Guard, many of whom pretended that the road was encumbered by the cannon and ammunition waggons. "Where are the officers?" exclaimed the aide-de-camp. No one answered; several of them had hidden their heads in the hoods of their cloaks. After a deal of difficulty a few officers were found, and the Mobiles were set in motion, advancing towards the front on either side of the artillery. The Staff officers moved on a considerable distance with them, and did all they could to encourage them. There was singing of the "Marseillaise" and cries of "Vive la République!" and when we drew up our horses beside the road for the second time we thought that all was right. Then there came a second shower of lead, which, like those which we had already experienced, passed either over our heads or beside us. The Mobile Guard were so terror-stricken that some threw themselves flat on the ground, while others leaped into the ditches on either side of the road, without receiving any order to that effect. This last fire was followed by a deadly silence, which was only broken by a few musketry shots far

ahead. The Mobiles, in throwing themselves on the ground, had wounded each other with their bayonets. This naturally produced considerable confusion in the ranks; getting up again, they continued their clumsiness. Some were wounded in the feet; others in the legs; others in the hands and arms; and others in the back. I have since seen many of the wounded, and am therefore able to guarantee this statement. When the Mobiles had risen from the ground, they brought their rifles to their shoulders, and, although they had been expressly ordered to use their bayonets only, fired. A large portion of our troops were a considerable distance ahead, and they of course received the volley. You can easily form an idea of the confusion that ensued. The Italians and *Francs-tireurs*, who up to the present had sustained the German fire with admirable coolness, imagined that they were attacked by the enemy in the rear. Many of them evidently thought that they were cut off from the other portion of the army, and did their best to reach it. The Mobiles, seeing men coming towards them, turned tail and fled. Persuasion and menaces were alike powerless to bring them back. When kind words had failed, the officers of the Staff drew their swords and struck them over the back with the flat part, but the cowardly mass dodged them and fled into the fields. Then a certain number of *aides-de-camp* galloped to the head of the column, and implored the men to return; but they obstinately hastened along the road with their backs turned to the enemy. The retreat now became general. Garibaldi and his Staff were left almost alone, surrounded only by the 7th *Chasseurs d'Afrique* and the Italians. If at this moment the enemy had sent 500 horsemen after us, half of our army would have been either made prisoners or cut to pieces. Fortunately for us the Germans seemed to be contented with having driven us back, and did not seem to have any idea of the advantage they had gained.

The supplies necessary for the subsistence of the vast army besieging Paris were only partially drawn from Germany. Every day the roads leading to the capital for a distance of fifty or sixty miles from the city were traversed by numerous herds and flocks obtained by "requisitions," which were made beyond the limits of the devastation ordered by the French Government. Three weeks after Paris had been shut in, the first serious resistance to the columns sent out to make requisitions was encountered by a Prussian force at Toury, fifty-four miles on the road to Orleans. The defeat of a Prussian column of 2,500 men on the 5th of October led to the despatch of an Army Corps under General von der Tann, which cleared the way to Orleans, and entered

that city on the 11th of October, after a combat in and about the city lasting nine hours. These events signalized the first appearance of the Army of the Loire on the field of battle. The division which represented it on the 11th retired south of the Loire as far as La Férté St. Aubin, where troops from the east, south, and west were also assembled, and whence in a very short time the army was to return to the right bank and undertake important operations.

By the second week in November it became evident that the French were about to put forth determined efforts to retrieve their military position. M. Thiers, who had made the journey from Tours to Versailles in order to induce Count Bismarck to grant an armistice which should permit of the revictualling of Paris, had failed in that object, the Prussian Minister insisting that he ought not to grant so great an advantage to the French, except in return for some military equivalent. On the 7th, General von der Tann ascertained by reconnaissances that a French force was marching towards the road from Orleans to Paris, and had reached the forest of Marchenoir. On the 8th he marched out of Orleans with the 1st Bavarian Corps, moving westward, and on the 9th fell in with the French near Coulmiers. The Germans were about 18,000 strong, the French, under General d'Aurelle de Paladine, were about 60,000, but it is not certainly known how many were engaged. The Bavarians held their ground with great tenacity, repulsing successive charges of the French, until nightfall, when General von der Tann ordered a retreat in the direction of the reinforcements which were being sent to him from Chartres and Versailles. His junction with these was effected on the following day, but in the meantime Orleans had been occupied by the French. General d'Aurelle omitted no means of strengthening this regained position, and as the reinforcements he could receive were almost unlimited, no attempt was immediately made by the enemy to recapture Orleans. The movements of the French had made it evident that the mission of the Army of the Loire was nothing less than to attack the Army of the Crown Prince of Prussia in its rear, and relieve Paris. As soon as the French success at Orleans had been achieved, M. Gambetta issued a proclamation to the army, announcing that the Government expected the deliverance of the capital from its valour. General d'Aurelle, however, did not follow up his success so promptly as had been expected. Day after day he remained near Orleans in a state of inactivity which by no known facts could be accounted for. Von der Tann withdrew from Toury, whither he had at first retreated, to Angerville, on the road to Etampes, and it was thought that he must have done so in expectation of an attempt of the Army of the Loire

to march to Paris. But by the middle of November General von Voights Rhetz, commander of the 10th Corps, part of the army of Prince Frederick Charles, had arrived at Tonnerre with 20,000 men; and the Duke of Mecklenburg, with the right wing of the German army on the Loire, no longer regarding General d'Aurelle, marched westward, occupied Dreux after a short engagement, marched across the department of the Eure et Loire, and then through the Orne and the Sarthe as far as Bellême. Notwithstanding the weakened condition of Von der Tann, who had been left behind, General d'Aurelle remained in his position before Orleans, instead of striking at the enemy before the German reinforcements could come up.

The feeble resistance which the Duke of Mecklenburg had encountered in his advance was that of ill-organized troops raised in the west. By the end of November, however, General d'Aurelle began to move. He had formed an entrenched camp before Orleans, and armed it with ninety-five naval guns, manned by seamen from Cherbourg: it was believed that behind this defence his army might hold its ground under any circumstances, while drawing reserves and supplies from the country behind the Loire. The French army formed a semicircle around Orleans from the Forest of Cercottes, which it occupied, to the environs of Meung. On the extreme left the 17th Corps, under the orders of General de Sonis, was at first placed at Châteaudun, an advanced and dangerous position, which exposed that corps to the risk of being cut off, and which it became necessary to abandon. The disposition of the main body of the army was as follows:—On the left was the 16th Corps, under General de Chanzy; in the centre, with the head-quarters, the 15th, under General Martin des Pallières; on the right, the 20th, commanded by General Crouzat, who had been summoned in great haste from Chagny. The extreme right was formed by the 18th Corps, which at first was stationed at Gien, but took up a position at the extremity of the forest and in front of Montargis. The German right was commanded by the Duke of Mecklenburg, the centre by General von der Tann, and the left by Prince Frederick Charles. On the 28th of November, General d'Aurelle attacked the 10th Prussian Army Corps and 1st Cavalry Division, forming the German left wing at Beaune la Rolande, and had very nearly overthrown them, when the arrival of Prince Frederick Charles changed the fortunes of the day.

Just as the news of this engagement reached Tours, intelligence arrived there that General Ducrot had made a great sortie from Paris, and the manner in which the two events were announced in the speeches and proclamations of M. Gambetta satisfied the world that the efforts of the Army of the Loire and

the garrison of Paris had been concerted with a view to a common object. Fontainebleau was the point at which the two armies were to join hands, raise the siege of Paris, and incessantly attack the Germans, whose supplies would be cut off by a similar rising in their rear. It was necessary, however, for this purpose, that each French army should succeed in its separate enterprise, whereas, as we shall see, both failed.

On the 1st of December, Von der Tann was vehemently attacked, while reconnoitring on the old road to Chartres, and driven in a north-westerly direction past Loigny. On the 2nd the Grand Duke joining him, attacked and retook Loigny, and sent on a division to pursue the French in their retreat. On the same day General Chanzy, who commanded the 16th French Army Corps, sent two divisions as far as Artenay, which returned without fighting, and another division which attacked the Grand Duke's left wing, but was driven back past Poupry. The main body of the Army of the Loire was disposed with a view to cover Orleans, and against that point Prince Frederick Charles directed the bulk of his forces. His rapid movements rendered it impossible for the French to employ two of their Corps, stationed at Montargis, in time for the defence of the city. He sent the 9th Corps to Toury-Bazoches, the 3rd to Pithiviers, and the 15th, with three brigades, to Boyne. The 9th Corps was to advance on the road from Paris, the 3rd on that from Fontainebleau, and those of the Grand Duke on the road from Chartres to Orleans. On the morning of the 3rd Prince Frederick Charles joined the 9th Corps. The 18th Division advanced to Artenay, which the French had evacuated, and at Moulin d'Auvillers, a few miles farther on, defeated the enemy after some severe fighting, and continued their advance to Chevilly. This village, the key to the wood of Orleans, was already in the hands of the Grand Duke. On the evening of the day the 3rd Corps, after taking Sancerre, which was strongly fortified, and Chilleurs-aux-Bois, had advanced as far as Loury. The 9th Corps had only reached Cercottes and Aschires, Château St. Germain-le-Grand having been strongly fortified. The 10th Corps had taken Neuville aux-Bois, and driven the French back into the wood. On the 4th of December, the attack was recommenced. The 9th Corps advanced, and was met by a sharp fire from the wood, but General von Blumenthal took Cercottes, after some very severe fighting. In the meantime, the 36th Brigade advanced about four miles beyond St. Livo, where the way had been strongly barricaded. On the right wing, the Grand Duke had gradually driven the French backwards towards Orleans, and on the left, the 3rd Corps had reached St. Loup with but little fighting. In the evening, the German troops stood north, west, and east of

Orleans. The road to the south alone remained open to the French, and by this they effected their retreat, the Germans re-occupying the city.

The fighting on the Loire had been very severe. The corps of Generals Chanzy and de Sonis included many patriotic Breton leaders, who had brought their attached countrymen with them to fight in the most sacred of causes, and many of them fell. The Duke de Luynes was killed, Colonel Charette, commander of Papal Zouaves, was wounded, and General Cathelineau was made prisoner.

At Tours the losses of the Army of the Loire during this fatal week were computed at 15,000. The Germans, however, alleged, in their official journals that they had taken as many as 16,000 prisoners. The retreating French corps were pursued beyond and along the Loire. On the 7th of November General Chanzy was overtaken near Beaugency, and on the following day was defeated with loss. The issue of this battle determined the Government Delegation at Tours to remove its seat to Bordeaux. The Army of the Loire had not been destroyed. Including its reserve of 100,000, brought up from the south-east, it still numbered over 200,000 to 250,000 men: it had suffered reverses, but not a disaster, and it had given France assurances that her children had not lost their old capacity for war.

The great sortie from Paris before referred to began on the 29th of November, when General Vinoy led a force towards L'Hay and Choisy le Roi; but the chief effort of the garrison was made on the 30th. Generals Trochu and Ducrot addressed the army in the most energetic language on the greatness of the issue of the intended operations, and the duty of shrinking from no sacrifice for the country. In the night of the 29-30th General Ducrot issued from the Forest of Vincennes, crossed the Marne, with a force variously estimated at from 80,000 to 120,000 men, and fought obstinately to break through the lines held by the Würtembergers and Saxons. He succeeded in advancing a considerable distance, but when night fell he had been compelled to fall back to Brie and Champigny on the river, where, however, he remained. On the day following there was no fighting, but on the 2nd an attempt was made to retake Brie and Champigny, but, although the Germans were able to dislodge the enemy from those villages, they found that the fire of the forts made it impossible to hold them. The letter in which the Special Correspondent with the Army of the Meuse, under the Crown Prince of Saxony, describes the operations of the 2nd, also gives the topographical details necessary for following the plan of the original sortie:—

The reader must take to the map, if he would understand the events of the day. He will notice how the Marne, beginning at Gournay, runs first nearly due west to a little beyond Noisy le Grand, then makes a sweep south, on the eastern bank of which sweep stands the village of Brie, and then forms a couple of loops, within the most northerly of which are the villages of St. Maur and Champigny, and some distance to the east of the wide neck of the loop the larger village of Villiers-sur-Marne. It was in and around the three villages of Brie, Villiers, and Champigny where was enacted the bloody drama of November 30. When the curtain fell on that drama the Saxons stood fast in Villiers, spite of all that the French troops and the French forts could do to dislodge them. Brie and Champigny, lying so close under the lee of Fort Nogent and a strongly armed earthwork at Faisanderie, on the verge of the forest of Vincennes, overhanging St. Maur, remained in the hands of the French, for whatever good they were. What this advantage represented was simply this—that Brie gave them a footing, so to speak, on the Saxon mainland, while Champigny formed the key to the peninsula formed by the loop of the Marne. Whether the risk, nay the certainty, of the severe loss involved in an attempt to dislodge from positions, which may be fairly designated as outworks of their fortifications, is to be weighed in the balance, in a military sense, against the advantage to be gained by beating the Frenchmen out of places so protected, is a question the reply to which does not rest with me. But if it did, I would candidly give it as my opinion that the object of the besiegers would have been equally served by giving their forepost line on this face a wider and safer sweep. A line drawn from Gournay to Chennevières presents a continuous defensive position of considerable strength, the complement of which might be found in the utter destruction by fire and crowbar of the villages of Noisy and Villiers. Such a line would, at all events, have presented this advantage, that there need have been no fresh earth mounds, beneath which lie dead children of the Fatherland, outside it on the side towards the French forts.

But speculations of this kind are as tedious as they must be purposeless. The object of the day on the side of the Germans was to dislodge the French from these two villages—Brie and Champigny. To essay this task fell to the lot of Saxons, Würtembergers, and a brigade of the 2nd Army Corps. The Saxons engaged consisted of the 2nd Division of the Royal Saxon Army (the 24th Division of the German host), under the command of General von Netirhoff, and composed of the 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, and 108th Regiments. This,

taking each regiment at its full strength of three battalions, would represent fifteen battalions, or about 12,000 men; but, as more than one battalion was naturally elsewhere engaged on forepost duty, it may be outside the exact figures to put down the Saxon force engaged at 10,000 men. Before the commencement of operations these splendid troops occupied positions in Noisy, Champs, Gournay, Villiers, and the vicinity. The division of the Württembergers, the strength of which I cannot gauge, was commanded by General von Obernitz, a Prussian officer. Their positions were Ormesson, Chennevières, La Queue Noiseau, and the vicinity. I have spoken of a brigade of the 2nd Army Corps as co-operating, but I have reason to believe that this contingent was neither strictly a brigade nor did it amount to a division, but was made up of contributions from various portions of the Army Corps in question. It was commanded by General von Fransejks, who, in virtue of seniority, had the nominal direction of all the operations, which were, however, supervised generally as regarded the Saxons by Prince George in person, whose heedlessness of danger must sorely have tried the nerves of his Staff. The contingent from the 2nd Army Corps supported, and co-operated with, the Württembergers. The Saxons had no backing but their own resolute valour. In all, the German troops engaged and immediately supporting may have numbered about 22,000. The programme, as I have given it you, was complicated more or less unexpectedly by a counter-offensive operation projected by the French against Villiers, no doubt with the intention of penetrating farther, and of ultimately breaking through the cordon. Thus it fell out that as the Germans were pressing on to the attempt of driving the French out of Brie and Champigny, Messieurs the French were simultaneously pouring out with intent to take Villiers. When two bodies are going opposite ways in the same groove, it is a law of nature that a collision is the result. When the two bodies are armies, a fight is inevitable. Such events of that fight as came under my personal observation I shall endeavour to recount; but it is necessary first to give a brief description of the nature of the ground on which it took place. On the road to Noisy the south bank of the Marne is low, with a gradual rise, furrowed by inconsiderable rectangular depressions. As one reaches Noisy and looks southward, he sees towards Brie, and athwart the neck of the loop, a broad flat affording favourable scope for military evolutions. From this plain toward Villiers there rises gradually a low but shaggy elevation, covered mostly with copsewood and vineyards. This elevation is not continuous to Villiers. There are occasional

depressions, the debouchments of which cause the trivial hollows which occur on the road to Noisy. The general tendency is nevertheless upward, so that the table-land at the back of which lies Villiers is higher than any ground between it and the plain. The ridge, therefore, although hampered by hedges and brushwood, would form no bad standpoint for offering resistance to a force which, having deployed on the plain, should attempt to carry it, if it were not that it is swept by a direct fire from Fort Nogent at easy range, and enfiladed at longer range, but still effectually, from the batteries on Mont Avron.

When I crossed the river the hour already was considerably past nine. It seemed to me that Noisy was an eligible point from which to observe the operations, and accordingly I directed my way thither. I never wish to travel such a road again, nor to reach such a destination. The shells from Avron were coming very thick. Now they fell with a great splash into the Marne at my feet, starring the placid water as a stone stars a mirror; now there was a great bang on the road, and a belch of white smoke, or a dull thud on the frosty ground above. If the road was bad, Noisy itself was worse. It seemed as if the gunners in Avron and Rosny and Nogent were determined that not one stone of it should be left upon another. Now it was a shower of slates, as a shell crashed through a roof, refting the solid rafters as if they had been laths. Now half the side of a house went bodily as a huge projectile struck and crunched it. In the shortness of the range, strange to say, there was one element of safety. The fire had to be direct, not plunging, and, so massive were the walls, that if one could only manage to get two or three of them between him and the forts, he occupied a position of precarious safety. Brie divided with Noisy the attentions of the French batteries, and it appears that Brie is opener. I had heard that the 107th Regiment had made a dash into Brie out of Rosny early in the morning, and I wondered much how it fared with them. Hard enough, beyond doubt, but could they hold the place under such a ding-dong pelting? By ten o'clock the question was resolved. First, there came a drove of French prisoners, red-breeched regulars, up towards Noisy, along the slight shelter afforded by the use of the road. Then came Saxon soldiers, more prisoners, and finally the bulk of the 107th, in very open order, and making the most of the few opportunities for cover. It was not a pleasant way to traverse. The forts fired heavily upon captors and captured alike, and more than one Frenchman fell slain by missiles hurled from French weapons. As the struggling

columns came up I learned that the 107th, in its rapid rush in the morning, had surprised the occupants of Brie; some were asleep, others were composedly drinking their coffee. There was but trifling resistance, and nearly five hundred prisoners had been taken, including eight officers. The reason for the relinquishment of Brie on the part of the 107th was not far to seek. The terrible and persistent fire from the forts rendered it utterly untenable. It would have been folly—sheer Quixotry—to remain in a place teeming with bursting shells. No good could have been achieved by holding it under such conditions. The troops, compelled, that they might escape annihilation, to concentrate their attention solely on cover, could not possibly have acted in any way on the offensive; and as this must have been the sole purpose of the occupancy, its impracticability simply nullified the position in a strategic sense. In a physical sense, the shells were rapidly nullifying the occupants.

The prisoners looked sturdy fellows, and anything but ill-fed. Their heart was good, too, if one might judge from passing expressions. A sergeant bade me “bon jour” as he went by, and told me cheerily that if any one indulged the anticipation of a speedy capitulation of Paris, he was extremely out in his reckoning. Food was plentiful, he said, with a laugh, and the programme was sorties every day in every direction. I believe it was this laughing philosopher who afterwards gave up a proclamation of General Ducrot, dated the 28th ult., and setting forth that he did not mean to re-enter Paris alive. I dare swear he will not do so if he should chance to fall into the hands of the Germans. A drum-head court-martial and a volley from a firing party will assuredly be his fate, and I, for one, say, serve him right. There was found also, I learn, on one of the prisoners, a proclamation emanating from General Trochu, that commander with “plan on the brain,” announcing that the time had now come for making great sorties, since the German, or, as he calls it, the Prussian, line had been greatly weakened (perhaps by the fall of Metz), and that his plan was to peg away at sorties till he had cut his way through. The prisoners were escorted back to Chelles, where, at a late period of the day, I saw them penned in the yard of the Mairie.

As the procession from Brie had finished filing through Noisy, an ominous sight met my eye in another direction as I peered through a loophole I had contrived. There, on the gradual slope of the farther bank of the Marne, under the wing of Fort Nogent, and extending right and left along the line of the Chaumont railway, were dense columns of French infantry.

How they came there I know not; it was as if the spectacle had sprung up by magic. Now they stood fast, closing up as the fronts of the battalions halted; then there was a slow movement forward, till the head of the column dipped out of sight between the village of Nogent and the river. Then there seemed a final halt, and the dense masses stood there, the bayonets glittering in the sun, as if the men who carried them had come out to be spectators of the effects of that shell-fire which was cutting the air above their heads. But, little by little, there was a gradual trickling off, as it appeared, down to the bight of the river, between Nogent and Brie. Was there a bridge there? There was the railway bridge, a lofty viaduct, but there was a gap in one of its arches that rendered it useless. Presently, on the plain to the south of Brie, there became visible a knot of red breeches, that grew denser and denser every moment. Simultaneously the whole sprang into life. From the farm buildings about Tremblay, from St. Maur and Joinville, there poured out vast bodies of French troops, deploying at the double. The line seemed to extend right athwart the neck of the loop. What happened to Champigny I know not from personal observation; but I have been informed that the Würtemburgers, after some desperate fighting, had driven the French out of it not long after eight o'clock, to be in their turn subjected to a violent attack and partial expulsion by the right of the formation to which I have just referred. The tirailleurs dashed into the thickets lining the foot of the rise, and scrambled up through the weinbergs. The troops behind them followed in serried columns. Whence had they come? They had crossed during the night, and occupied the loop. Their bridges must have been between Joinville and Nogent, and the nullification of Brie enabled the utilization, at the later hour, of yet another bridge somewhere between Brie and the railway viaduct.

Noisy seemed no place for a man who valued his liberty. The Bois de Grace lying in front of Champs afforded a favourable cover for a détour into the rear of Villiers, which evidently was the point for which the French advance was intended. That force—I refer exclusively to the section which threatened Villiers—must have been at least 20,000 strong. How large was the force with which the Würtemburgers and their good friends of the 2nd Army Corps had to deal towards Champigny. I have no means of even roughly estimating. Surely in these dense columns, standing in support under Nogent, there could not have been less than 20,000 men. But directly and face to face with it was the 20,000 men of the left advance with whom the 10,000 Saxons had to cope. Not with them alone, but

with those terrible projectiles also, a storm of which incessantly clashed on to the upper ground on which stands Villiers, and into the glades behind it.

General Codrington, in a recent letter to a contemporary, appears to me to address a polite request to war correspondents that they will get themselves shot with neatness and despatch. He would be glad to learn whether the tactical arrangements as to skirmishers, columns of companies, and brigades are carried out in real war under fire according to manœuvring practice in peace. The railway is now open to Lagny, and Lagny is only nine kilomètres in the rear of Chelles. There will probably be a good deal of fighting in this locality for some time to come, and if General Codrington has a fancy for brushing up his Crimean experiences I shall be happy to lend him a field-glass, and further to point out an eligible position in the neighbourhood of Villiers, whence he will be able to sweep the flat terrain in the bend of the Marne, and to experience also the polite attentions of Forts Nogent and Rosny. Of the manner of the French formation, I can only say that their skirmishers came out with as much regularity as if the day's work had been a peaceful parade. The deployment sprang up with immense rapidity and seeming discipline, but there appeared to be considerable looseness in the formation, a total want of interval, and, indeed, in places, an overlapping of battalions.

Had there been nothing else to do on the part of the Saxons but to repulse an assault on Villiers, directed solely and straightly against it, the task would have been comparatively simple and not very bloody, notwithstanding the artillery fire. But the French advance, threatening in its deployment as it did to sweep right on, overlapping Villiers, up the space between that village and Noisy, and so to get through upon Champs, called for other tactics. Villiers could only serve as a position on which to lean the Saxon left. It became necessary to meet the French in the open. From behind Villiers the several regiments came out to the right on to the brow and under the shell-fire. As the French troops came up the gentle acclivity, the guns of the forts continued to play without interruption. So narrow was the margin that I question much whether a shell or two did not find its billet in the French ranks. I stood by the 108th Regiment as it quitted the position in which it had found some shelter. A couple of young lieutenants gaily shook hands with a Hussar aide-de-camp, who had just ridden up with an order, as they passed him to go out into the battle. On went the regiments in their dense columns of companies, the shells now crashing into the ranks,

now exploding in the intervals. Line was formed, the rear files pelting up at the double, and in a twinkling less than fifty yards separated the combatant lines. Then came a volley, then a venomous file-firing, and the French broke and gave ground. It was only to back into the next dip to let the guns of the fort go to work again. The Saxons had perforce to find what cover they might. When the 108th Regiment came back—it had not been gone twenty minutes—thirty-five officers out of forty-five had gone down. Neither of the blithe lieutenants were to the fore. And now came a lull in the musketry fire, just as a few minutes before there had been a lull in the cannon fire. The Saxons could not get their artillery into action with advantage. The ground itself was unfavourable, while the fire from the forts must, in the nature of things, have speedily silenced the field guns. Therefore, this great advantage was lost to them—an advantage only to be appreciated by those who have seen German artillery in action.

What I have been writing of took place before noon. After a little the artillery fire from the forts slackened considerably, and the French infantry made no demonstration. On the German left, however, about Champigny, it was evident that hard fighting was going on. About one the French made another advance, having, as I believed, received considerable reinforcements. The Saxon infantry confronted them on the challenge, with the old result. But a different policy was this time adopted. It was plain the only escape from the terrible thunderbolts lay in getting to close quarters with the French infantry, unless, indeed, a retrograde movement was to be made, and that was not to be thought of. So when the French fell back, the Saxons followed on, as if they wanted to settle the question with the bayonet-point. It was the old motto, "*Vorwärts, immer vorwärts!*" But the *vorwärts* was very slow. What happened for the next hour I could only guess by the constant crackling of the small-arms. The forts confined themselves seemingly for the most part to firing into and over Champigny and Villiers. But at length the French were visible slowly and stubbornly falling back across the north side of the neck, the Saxons pushing them hard, the French ever and anon rallying.

On this portion of the plain south of Brie there was a prolonged struggle. I understand the Saxons were striving to get at and cut the obnoxious pontoon-bridge. But this was an impossibility when Fort Nogent went to work again with the terrible accuracy of which the short range admitted. The combatants parted about three o'clock, both sides falling back. The fort



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re continued some little time longer. What shall I say of the result? Not much have the Saxons gained. Was there much to gain? The Würtembergers hold, I believe, one end of Champigny. According to my information, Brie to-night stands empty and desolate—it may be, wounded men are groaning in its cellars. There were French in it this morning, later there were Saxons. That is all. But look at the bloody side of the picture. The number of dead I cannot ascertain. I fear the German wounded are over 1,000 men. The French, if they have lost fewer in killed and wounded—a matter as to which I am unable to do more than draw an inference—have seen the last, until the war is over, of some 500 stout soldiers. It is true they will eat no more of the stores of food in Paris, but this must be but poor consolation.

The French loss in these operations was very heavy. In letters from Paris, written a week after, it was computed at 10,000 men. Probably they inflicted equal loss upon their enemy. But the end had not been gained. The iron girdle around Paris had not been sundered. A junction with the Army of the Loire had not been effected, and that army itself had been compelled to renounce the hope of saving Paris. In an order of the day announcing the termination of the sortie, General Ducrot said, that if he had persevered in his plan after the resistance he had encountered, he should only have courted disasters and imperilled the cause of the defence.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON the 5th of December a German *parlementaire* presented himself at the French outposts, and requested to be conducted to the Governor of Paris. He was taken to General Trochu, to whom he delivered the following letter:—

“Versailles, Dec. 5.

“It may be useful to inform your Excellency that the Army of the Loire was defeated near Orleans yesterday, and that that town is reoccupied by the German troops. Should, however, your Excellency deem it expedient to be convinced of the fact through one of your own officers, I will not fail to provide him with a safe-conduct to come and return. Receive, General, the expression of the high considerations with which I have the honour to be, your very humble and obedient servant,

“The Chief of the Staff,

“VON MOLTKE.”

ENVIRONS OF PARIS AND ITS FORTIFICATIONS.



There could be no doubt as to the motive of the German commander in communicating, at the earliest possible moment, and in this formal manner, intelligence which was certain to reach Paris in a few days without his intervention. In October M. Gambetta had promised that, if Paris would hold out only a few weeks, it should be delivered; and in the same month another member of the Bordeaux Government had publicly offered to "have his head cut off" if the Army of the Loire, which, he said, was 300,000 strong, did not relieve Paris in December. It was allowable, then, for Counts Bismarck and Moltke to assume that intelligence of a defeat of the Loire Army so decisive as to be sealed by the capture of Orleans, would produce a strong impression on the mind of the Government of National Defence, and, perhaps, lead to such a review of the condition of France and its armies as would prepare the way for negotiations for peace. It was known that Count Bismarck intended to give the French Government an opportunity of this kind, and that he was much disappointed that no advantage was taken of his movement. General Trochu received the *parlementaire* very hospitably, and, in a conversation on military affairs, gave him to understand that he cast no doubt upon the accuracy of his information.

Count Moltke's letter was discussed on the same day at a special Council of Ministers. One of their number, M. Ernest Picard, thought the opportunity should be embraced of examining the question whether an honourable peace might not then be made, and his opinion appeared to make some impression on his colleagues. General Trochu, however, remarked that these overtures only proved the critical position of the enemy in the heart of a hostile country, and in the depth of winter; that the German victory might be less complete than it was represented; that everything was to be gained by continuing the struggle until help came from the provinces; that Paris could hold out a long time, and that victories might follow reverses. The true policy of the Government, he insisted, was to fight on to the end. His eloquence and enthusiasm induced the Council to decide unanimously on the continuance of the war, and the *parlementaire* was sent back with the following letter:—

"Paris, Dec. 6.

"Your Excellency thought it might be useful to inform me that the Army of the Loire was defeated near Orleans, and that that town is reoccupied by German troops.

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of that communication, which I do not think it expedient to verify through the means which your Excellency suggests to me. Receive,

General, the expression of the high consideration with which I have the honour to be, your very humble and very obedient servant,

“The Governor of Paris,
“General TROCHU.”

This interchange of communications was at once made known to the citizens, by a note transmitted to the journals. The members of the Government appended to Count Moltke's letter a commentary, which pledged them to a strenuous prosecution of the defence. “This news,” they said, “which reaches us through the enemy, supposing it to be accurate, does not deprive us of our right to rely on the great movement of France rushing to our relief. It changes nothing either in our resolutions or our duties. A single word sums them up—to fight! Long live France! Long live the Republic!”

Thus heroically did Paris, in the after-words of the same Government, “resign itself to the most cruel privations, and accept ruin, disease, and death.”

The “great movement of France,” on which General Trochu and his colleagues relied, was no vain dream, and can we say that the Government had no right to hope for success as the reward of continued resistance? It did not so appear at the time to impartial neutral observers. Military students amongst ourselves pointed out that France had gained greatly in strength ever since the Emperor's surrender at Sedan. At that date, Paris alone offered a show of resistance, and the garrison of the capital, numerous as it was, was composed of raw levies and of beaten and demoralized troops.

Within the two months that had elapsed, Paris had been rendered impregnable to an assault; she had an ample and well-appointed garrison; two powerful active armies had been created within her walls, and in the recent battles had given proofs of real courage and discipline. Outside Paris, and intended to relieve it, three armies—those of the North, of the West, and of the Loire—had, as it were, grown up suddenly, and were increasing daily in strength. These armies were, no doubt, of inferior quality, being made up chiefly of young troops; but they were very formidable in numbers; they held positions that seriously threatened their foe; and the Army of the Loire, though lately defeated, had shown that it could fight, and that it was far from a contemptible force. Nor was this all. Behind the lines created by Paris and her relieving armies France was gathering in strength. She was renewing her lost material, was obtaining powerful artillery, and organizing recruits by hundreds of thousands. If these levies were as yet but of

little value, before many months were over they might become good soldiers.

True, the German armies were large and of the best quality, but within or around Paris they were extremely inferior in numbers to those they confronted. As long as Paris should hold out, the German armies would remain exposed to most formidable operations, both from within the city and from without, on the part of an enemy greatly superior in numbers, and having remarkable advantages of position. They were, from the very nature of the case, liable to be caught between two assailants, and placed between two fires, should the active army of Paris and even one of the relieving armies be able to join hands; and in that event they would be in considerable danger. Furthermore, the lines of their communications even close to Paris must remain seriously menaced, and should a powerful force once lay hold of these arteries of military life, they would certainly be obliged to raise the siege, and probably be in very great difficulties. In any case, it was argued, the defence of Paris would have the effect of raising France from the lowest point of military depression; of making the chances of war, so long as the capital held out, unfavourable in many respects to the Germans; and of gaining time for her to protract the struggle. Under the influence of considerations of this kind, the war was resumed on both sides with new ardour.

Paris received the unwelcome tidings concerning Orleans before it had satisfactorily accounted for its own failures in the great sorties of November 30 and December 2. Outside Paris the officers and men of the German army were comparing their experiences of the recent hard fighting, and speculating on its probable results. On the 4th of December, the Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony (formerly the Correspondent at Metz) wrote from Le Vert Galant:—

Leaving Chelles this morning, I rode through several villages in the direction of Margency, a spot I have almost learned to consider my home, when between Aulnay and Le Blanc Mesnil I met the Head-quarter Baggage Column headed by the Quartermaster-General. His tidings were that the Crown Prince's head-quarters had been removed this morning to Le Vert Galant, and that Prince George was to stand fast in Champs. This arrangement was temporary, as he hoped, while the troubles lasted in the region of the peninsula of which I have written so much. After the threatening symptoms there had subsided, a reversion to the old positions was to take place. This information naturally sent me back to Le Vert Galant, where, sure enough, I found the Crown Prince located in the

château—a meaner château by far than that of Margency—and whither the larger portion of his Staff had accompanied him. When I arrived, a placid breakfast was in progress, nothing occurring to disturb the mid-day meal. I breakfasted in Chelles with Major von Schoenberg and the Staff of the 103rd Regiment (Saxons). While breakfast was proceeding, it was suddenly announced that the whole 23rd Division, of which the 103rd form a part, was to cross the Marne. No destination was announced. They might go to Noisy, under the terrible fire; they might relieve the Würtembergers in the hardly less dangerous Villiers; or it might be their lot to occupy the splendid château of the wealthy soapboiler in Champs. Nobody knew, but the movement looked like fighting. Before coffee was served, however, there arrived a couple of lieutenants of the 108th Regiment, come to take up quarters for the regiment, and bringing the announcement that the whole of the 24th Division was under orders to take the positions of the 23rd on the north side of the Marne. The anticipations of an immediate renewal of the combat subsided on this intelligence—all that was in progress was merely an outer change of quarters, and the relief of a division that had suffered very much on the 2nd instant.

But to return to the château at Chelles, and to the two sprightly young lieutenants of the 108th, who came there to choose quarters for their brother officers. The youngest of them, a boy of about nineteen, had rare luck on the 2nd. By the doctrine of chances he should have been on the look-out for a grave, not for quarters. In the short skirts of his tunic were four bullet-holes, his left shoulder-strap was severed and hung in fringes from another bullet, and he had no knee on the left leg of his overalls—the piece had been torn clean out by the fragment of a shell. The young rascal walked lame from the latter casualty, but otherwise he was as sound as a bell, and the way in which he finished a yard of “wurst” was a sight worth seeing. While our young friends were talking with Major von Schoenberg about quarters, there dropped in the representative of another regiment on the same errand. I was an auditor of the interview. It was too good not to be narrated. Representative of incoming regiment: “You have here a beautiful place, Herr Major, with a fine *Speise-saal* and a grand piano. This will suit well our Herr Oberst.” Herr Major Schoenberg: “Oh yes, and many grenades come into the garden. That will furnish a pleasant accompaniment to the piano.” As if to confirm the Major’s words, whiz—bang, came a shell from Mont Avron, and lit right in front of the window, sending the pellets of frozen mud right through the

glass. The Major grinned a dry grin. His sympathy had been enlisted as regards quarters in favour of the young lieutenants. The formal staff-officer hesitated. Whiz, bang, another shell—this time on the roof. He looked still more undecided. Then up came the doctor of the 103rd, and recounted how the shells yesterday had interfered with him. This was enough for our friend. He left the field to the young lieutenants, and went in search of quarters less exposed.

As I jogged out of Chelles, on the way to Montfermeil, I met the whole of the 1st Infantry Guard Regiment. This was the *avant courrier* of a whole division of the Guards, including the Artillery, pressing on to occupy Chelles and the vicinity. I trust the movement, and those movements along the whole line of which this was but a detail, do not augur anything more than a design to strengthen the position across the dangerous peninsula in such a manner as to negative whatever advantage the French may ostensibly derive from their occupation of Brie, Champigny, and the peninsula in the rear of these villages. As I rode out of Chelles, the shells—how similar are the two names!—came pounding into it vigorously. The French must have seen the movement of the troops, and thought to inconvenience it with their long-range artillery. A German battery on a bluff between Chelles and Montfermeil might have attempted a reply, but Mont Avron was allowed to have it all its own way. The only casualty, so far as I know, which the fire produced was to startle a pair of fine grey horses which, with a carriage behind them, were coming down the steep slope out of Montfermeil. Off they tore at a furious gallop, kicking the splinter bar to bits, and utterly ignoring the frantic zeal with which the driver tugged at the reins. They dashed through a company of Guards, routing with ignominy a section which had taken up the road, bayonets levelled, with intent to stop them. The driver jumped out here, and alighted safely on the top of a soldier. The horses galloped on, strewing the road with portmanteaus, cigar-boxes, a mattress, and other contents of the carriage, which was rapidly going to pieces. At length, still pursuing the same headlong pace, they vanished round a corner, and their ultimate fate I know not.

Forty years ago there could have been few finer residences round Paris than a certain château which need not be named, but which is situated on the plain somewhere between Gagny and Ville Evrart. The railway came and infringed on its amenities, but not to any great extent, the noble old trees acting as a screen to the track. Later came the Germans, and they bedevilled the amenities far worse than the railway. War time

is a bad season for trim grass-plots, painted staircases, and luxurious carpets. Then, last of all, came shells from Mont Avron, over the way, and played still further havoc with the amenities that still kept up a self-assertion in the face of the hostile occupation. The hour is midnight. A huge wood fire is blazing in the noble drawing-room of this mansion. In a comfortable arm-chair on one side of this fire sits a middle-aged lieutenant, opposite him an individual in civilian attire. The two are drinking grog, and chatting as they drink. They are old friends. They knew each other a dozen years ago in Luneburg, that dullest of all dull Hanoverian cities, when as yet King George, the pious, the blind, and the obstinate, reigned in Hanover, and annexation was only dimly apprehended by far-sighted people, who—such is the lot of the sapient—were put down as theorists and alarmists. The middle-aged lieutenant had fought in six-and-sixty in the army of his monarch, and when the evil day came he, with some eighty comrades, transferred his services to Saxony, in preference to remaining in an army which thenceforth was to be merely a Prussian Army Corps. The talk is of the old days in Luneburg, of pleasant rides by the banks of the menau, of rowing excursions up to Rothensteuser, of naughty scampers to Hamburg, of those pretty English girls that stole the hearts of a couple of regiments of infantry, of the old Waterloo major that lived by the waterside, of certain sensational steeplechases and memorable mess dinners. Unto these two there enters Under-officer Schultz. Schultz is a Saxon, but utterly unlike the bulk of his countrymen. Schultz would make an excellent study for an artist anxious to limn a Cameronian or one of Cromwell's Ironsides. His name might be Praise-the-Lord-Barebones. Tall, gaunt, thin-flanked, and square-shouldered, with high cheek-bones, and a lofty, narrow forehead, Under-officer Schultz enters, and bringing his heels together with an audible clank, stands bolt upright and motionless. "Well, Schultz?" asks the lieutenant. "Herr Lieutenant, the patrol is ready," replies Schultz, with solemn curtness. Herr Lieutenant bolts the heeltap of his grog, rises, tightens his sword-belt, feels for his little friend the six-chambered revolver, puts on his cloak and helmet, pulls up his long boots, and is ready. The civilian's preparations are simpler, since he has no arms to see to. Out into the night air. "Der Teufel! what a beastly night." It was frosty in the morning, and now it rains a drizzly rain. The wet has mingled with the frost, and the ground is at once slippery and sticky. It will be dirty and heavy walking to-night, that is clear. There is a moon, but the sky seems as muddy as the earth, and her rays serve

only to impart a dirty white tinge to the fine drizzling rain.

The patrol—three sturdy Saxon soldiers—are standing motionless in the gloom, the red cigar-tips showing dimly through the rime. “March!” says the lieutenant. Schultz takes his place in front of the patrol, and behind the lieutenant and his companion, and away go the little party, slipping and stumbling down the tree-shadowed avenue. They traverse about half an English mile of flat country, crossed by numerous walls and fences, enclosing fields and the grounds surrounding châteaux. The way is winding and the road horrible. There is no life in this tract, till lately inhabited by wealthy Parisians. Somewhere about is a new château, not quite finished, belonging to the great French surgeon, Nelaton. But the masons and carpenters have stopped their work, and are now in the Garde Mobile, and the doctor is certainly not at home. Suddenly the ground begins to rise. The party are climbing the steep slope of a hill. That hill is Mont Avron. There is no road, only a rough track through the shaggy copsewood. At every second step somebody is on his hands and knees; now stumbling over a stump, now losing his foot-hold in the mud with the frost-hardened substratum. The hill-track winds and wriggles, but it is always upward, and that steeply too, so that the breathing comes harder and shorter. Suddenly there comes a smothered “Halt!” from vigilant Under-officer Schultz, that curious pitch of the voice in full development that is the characteristic of Saxon-German, and that reminds one so much of the “twang” of the fisher-folk in the villages on the Moray Firth. Under-officer Schultz has not called “Halt!” for nothing; his quick ear has detected coming footsteps. “Dodge behind the thick brushwood there,” is the sharp-whispered order of Herr Lieutenant. The party is off the track in a twinkling, hiding like a Fenimore Cooper’s Indian, the civilian, in particular, squatting like a rabbit. The movement was not an instant too soon. The sound of the footsteps and voices comes nearer and nearer. There is a medley of jabber, everybody speaking together in shrill French. “A patrol of Francs-tireurs,” whispers the Lieutenant. A nice patrol party truly, doing their work with that silent vigilance and caution which the duty essentially calls for. Pop! a gun goes off. Have the jabberers spotted the lurkers in the wood? If so, the thought occurs to one of them that a certain worthy woman in a certain little island across a certain Channel has a remarkably strong chance of being a widow in the course of a few minutes. Tut! the apprehension was ludicrous. One of the Francs-tireurs had fired off his piece in mere lightness of heart. Probably he shot into the air. Stern

Under-officer Schultz gives a snort of contempt, and mutters between his teeth, "*Dummer kerl.*"

The Franc-tireur patrol has passed, and the squatters get up from their muddy position, and stumble onward and upward. They are near the top of the hill now. A light is visible through the undergrowth of scrub, and there is a halt. The light is the watch-fire of a French picket. There is a sentry posted, who has his back to the forest and his face to the fire, such a position affording him full opportunities for the exercise of vigilance. What is he doing now? Under-officer Schultz gives another snort of contempt as the sentry stacks his piece against a tree, walks up to the fire and has a drink, taking a good long warm before he comes back. All the picket are drinking. Some seem tolerably on towards drunkenness, judging by the clatter of loud voices. Above, on the flat summit of the hill, is the battery. It is evident that there is another watch-fire inside it. The earthwork looks three ways, and seems to have six guns mounted on each face. It is the latest construction of the besieged. It has only been in operation for about ten days, and it is an abominably mischievous affair. There are no movements or signs of movements in the vicinity. This ascertained, the patrol takes its weary way back to the château. Getting down the hill is worse than it was getting up. How welcome is the wood fire in the drawing-room! Herr Lieutenant and the civilian look at each other, and simultaneously burst into a fit of laughter. They are plastered with mud from head to foot. Under-officer Schultz, who is muddier than either—for his nose seems to have been rooting in red clay—stands by as solemn as a mute at a funeral. He gets an order, goes right about face as by machinery, and disappears. Grog and cigars in the arm-chairs.

Champs, Dec. 6.—The troubles seem over in this quarter, at any rate for the time. The Crown Prince yesterday paid a second visit to his brother, and an informal council of war was held; the faces at which wore a much more cheerful expression than those which surrounded Prince George's table on the night of the 2nd instant. There was reason for the good spirits. The French have lost heart, or have determined to concentrate their efforts in some other direction. Yesterday morning it was found that they had not only evacuated Brie and Champigny, but had wholly abandoned the peninsula, and broken or withdrawn the bridges over which they had crossed on to it. This operation was performed under a very heavy fire from Mont Avron and Fort Nogent, which impeded the Würtembergers not a little in their occupation of

the vacated villages. Several were killed and wounded in the course of the morning. Towards afternoon the fire was renewed at a longer range—at a longer range, indeed, than it was believed any guns in Paris could carry—and this fire, after a lull in the evening, was renewed in the night. There were, however, no demonstrations of infantry, and a shell-fire from the forts is what may be expected and submitted to with as good a grace as may be. It is true that while it lasts it makes Champs rather unpleasant quarters. It may be asked, then, why I should have returned hither, when the Crown Prince's staff, to which I am attached, has returned to Margency this forenoon, and when Prince George has gone back to his old quarters at Le Vert Galant? The explanation is, that I have a keen anxiety to become more familiar with the topographical features of a locality which will be memorable as the theatre of what was really a great battle. My purpose will be considerably facilitated by the circumstance that the engineer and artillery staffs of the Maas Army* have not accompanied the Prince in his return to Margency, but have come down here to Champs. This is at once a pleasure and an advantage. Lieutenant-Colonel Oppermann, Major Hoffmann, and Lieutenant Hoffmann, are gentlemen of thorough professional knowledge, and it has been my fortune, since the first day of my connection with the Maas Army, to share the society and the quarters of the first and last of these officers. If there is nothing of interest in the region of Champs, or nothing threatening to occur to the south of it, a return to Margency is practicable at very short notice.

Having only been here an hour, I have not yet had time to go over the battle-field, which, however, I understand presented a spectacle testifying to the stubborn valour of the Saxons and Würtembergers. There lay whole ranks, I am told, cold in death, the bodies of men who did not know the meaning of the verb to run away, and who stood on the slopes of the "weinberg" exposed to that terrible fire, concerned for nothing but that the French should not succeed in their object. To-day many of the brave dead have found a soldier's grave. That the corpses lay there in the face of day so long is owing to the conduct of the French. What wanton devilry could stimulate officers commanding artillery to fire on burial parties I do not pretend to be able to conceive; but this is certain, that men with the spade and not the rifle on their shoulders were yesterday slain by the fire from the forts, and became

* Army of the Meuse—or Maas—was the designation given to the Fourth Army, formed and placed under the orders of the Crown Prince of Saxony, when Marshal MacMahon took the field with the army he had organized at Châlons.

themselves claimants for the graves which they came to dig for others. Nor was the fire occasional. It might then have been a mistake. A steady fire was maintained throughout the morning, and it seemed, according to my information, that deliberate aim was taken even at individuals.

The loss, as now ascertained, is greater than in my letter, written on the evening of the action, I ventured to anticipate. Writing then, I was specially cautious not to overshoot the mark—exaggeration on such points savours either of bunkum or of nervousness—but I think it must have been apparent that I apprehended a more severe loss than that which I allowed myself specifically to indicate. The latest figures (and these do not pretend to be definite) give the loss of the Würtembergers at forty officers and 1,500 rank and file killed and wounded, and the Saxon loss at seventy-six officers and 2,000 rank and file killed and wounded. I am unable to state whether these figures include the “missing,” and the question is an interesting one. “Missing” means a prisoner. Now it is certain that in the open the French took no prisoners. A little mystery envelops the doings in the villages, which it is not easy to penetrate, and one must resort to collateral and circumstantial evidence, if he can find it. Prisoner statistics are always a good test. If you choose to say that you evacuated a village because you found it untenable, the euphemism may be allowed to you; but if I learn that you had to leave behind you certain wounded men, who fell into the enemy’s hands—and, it may be, sound men, who had to lay down their arms per force of circumstances—I am at liberty to put my own construction on your little periphrase.

I was witness yesterday, in Le Vert Galant, of a scene full of pathos. The 107th Regiment had marched in on the previous night and taken up quarters. In the morning came on what the field-post had for the regiment in a large waggon. The waggon drew up at each battalion orderly room, and the bugle sounded the rally. It was a curious medley that streamed out as the tail-board of the waggon was let down. The German field-post is an elastic institution, and I think if you chose to send one out a box-mangle, or a live tiger in its cage, there would be no objections on the score of bulk. There streamed down cigar-boxes, wrapped in canvas, long shapeless rolls that were eloquent of “wurst,” flabby packets that one might swear contained underclothing, and little boxes that rolled as they fell, and evidently contained thalers. The pile was made against the wall, the sergeant cleared a space and commenced on the pile, letter by letter, packet by packet. I made a note of the responses to the first six names, and simply transcribe

it: "Schumann?" "Todt" (dead). "Kaspar?" "Verwundet." "Schultz?" "Weg." "Stolberg?" "Todt." "Schrader?" "In Paris." "Bergmann?" "In Lazareth." Thus proceeded the dreary roll-call. It was that of the 2nd battalion, which has suffered most severely. Before the sergeant had done there was quite a heap of packets which their owners will never claim. The number of "Wegs" was surprising. "Weg" is a wide word. It may mean anything; prisoner, missing, unburied, deserted (but I never heard of a German soldier deserting). The sum of it is—"Not here; and the Lord knows where he is." "In Paris," was not an uncommon response, but always with a laugh.

Dec. 8.—The French in Paris do not appear to have lost heart on account of their reverses in the Orleans quarter. General von Moltke took particular care that the evil tidings should be communicated in detail to General Trochu, who does not appear to have kept them to himself, in imitation of the conduct of Bazaine at Metz. At all events, as I learned this afternoon from the head-quarters of General Obernitz at Malnoue, an intimation from the French Commander-in-Chief has appeared in the Paris papers, proclaiming that the Orleans news has not in the slightest degree altered the conditions of the siege of Paris; that his business and duty are to defend Paris, and this alone; and that he means to do so to the very uttermost. There is an absence of bunkum about this announcement which forces one to believe in it. From the conviction that Trochu will allow no outside circumstances to influence him, to the consideration of the expediency of a bombardment, is a natural step. I yesterday mentioned that I have some reason to think the German tactics are altered, and that you will ere long hear of the commencement of the bombardment. Without being able to give definite confirmation to this impression to-day, I can only say that all I hear tends in that direction. I have even heard the day for the commencement of the bombardment definitely named—the 12th instant, but I must expressly guard against the supposition that this statement has been made in official circles. I am living here in the midst of the men in whose hands are all the dispositions in the contingency of a bombardment; but I must do the gentlemen in question the justice to say, that they keep a secret, if secret there be, with a strictness which I thoroughly respect. To my direct questions on the subject, I have received the manly and straightforward reply, that on this point I must not ask for information, and this is enough for me.

This afternoon two deserters were brought in to the Würtemberg

divisional head-quarters in Malnoue. They had come from Noisy-le-Roi, had traversed the space between Forts Nogent and the Marne, and had crossed the river somewhere below Brie. They mentioned the construction on the slope in front of Nogent of a battery mounted with guns of twelve-centimètre calibre, and stated that the vicinity was full of infantry. While riding to-day, I met a Hamburg merchant driving full pelt to the railway at Lagny in a state of panic. He was full of a story that the siege of Paris was to be raised at once, in consequence of the interception of a balloon from Paris containing a despatch from Trochu, to the effect that he meant to gain Versailles at any cost. The King, according to the panic-stricken Hamburger, was off to Rheims to-night with half the army, and the Crown Prince was to be left behind to fight his way out, covering His Majesty's retreat. Poor man! in the recesses of that deep waggon of his lay, it may be, a good deal of ill-gotten gear, and it might have been a troubled conscience which made his apprehensions so causelessly active. This forenoon I rode over to a large field Lazareth of wounded, which the Würtembergers have at Pontault, a place to the south of Malnoue. Originally there were about 350 wounded brought here; but, in pursuance of the usual policy, all have been sent towards Germany, with the exception of those cases which are too severe to bear removal. Of these there remain about 120, including a considerable number of amputations. It is the critical time with these amputation cases—the third or fourth day—when the ligatures are prone to come away and great effusions of blood recur. In addition to the very bad cases, consisting of Würtembergers chiefly, with a few Frenchmen and men of the 2nd Army Corps, there are in the place about eighty Frenchmen, too severely wounded for the French to remove them from the field, and who were brought in by the Würtemberger ambulances. The Mayor of Noisy, a neighbouring village, has volunteered to take these poor fellows off the hands of the Würtemberg medical men, giving his personal guarantee for them as prisoners of war. In most of the cases the Mayor's guarantee was quite superfluous. Unless the war lasts far longer than any one expects, not many of these will be very formidable men for many a day after its termination. One word as to the Würtemberg field ambulances, which are admirable vehicles for their purpose. The hinder end contains places for four wounded men on stretchers, which are run in from the rear—two on the lower tier, two above. The front part is a kind of double coupé, comfortably padded and seated for six men not so severely wounded as to necessitate

a recumbent position. The sides are well screened, while at the same time free ventilation is secured. The body of the waggon is mounted on capital springs, and four good horses, with mounted drivers, ensure rapid conveyance to the Lazareth. The Würtembergers have special wounded trains of their own, which have been employed in despatching their men from Lagny to Würtemberg. The American construction of railway carriage is in use in Würtemberg, and it is easy to conceive the facilities for the conveyance of wounded afforded by this build. I learn from the Prince of Saxe-Weimar that one of those trains was inspected by our army medical representatives at the seat of war, Inspector-General Innes and Dr. Becker. The representatives of another of our institutions, the British National Society, put in a most opportune appearance both at Pontault and Noisiel, another large Lazareth in this neighbourhood. Four fourgons arrived from Meaux on the 4th instant, under the direction of Captain Brackenbury; and Dr. Biberstein, the chief of the medical staff, spoke with enthusiasm of the business-like manner in which the British fourgons were able to fulfil his requisitions, which he said were both large and various. The British Society beat the Berliner Hülfsverein this time. Active men as the almoners of the latter are, they only put in an appearance at Pontault yesterday.

While the doctor and myself were having a gossip before making a tour of the Lazareth, the Prince of Saxe-Weimar came to visit the wounded Würtembergers. He is married to a daughter of the King of Würtemberg, and has been commissioned by his parents-in-law to this kindly duty. The Prince is a big man: all the Saxe-Weimars run large. Prince Edward—our Guardsman—loomed almost gigantically through the fog on the morning of Inkermann. The Prince has a heart certainly big in proportion to his corporal bulk. Sad as were the sights the wards presented, it was a pleasant peregrination which I made round them in his company. The Prince went round with a box of cigars under his arm. With each man in turn he had a little conversation, which always ended in the question, "Can you smoke?" The affirmative response was all but universal. One or two poor fellows there were who seemed past caring for the cigar—past the power of speech, indeed. All that they could do was to look grateful for the Prince's kindly words. One bright-eyed young fellow replied warmly, "Ach ja, euere Hoheit!" The doctor shook his head, the boy was in the fever, and a cigar might not be the best thing in the world for him. But he pleaded so hard, that the good doctor relented, and let him have the grateful

weed. Another patient would have the Prince see the piece of shell that had made a hole in him. "In the cupboard," he directed the orderly. The cupboard was searched, but it could not be found, and the doctor would have the Prince pass on. But he would not, and by-and-by the bit of shell turned up in the wounded man's waistcoat pocket. There were two men who had each lost a leg, with whom the Prince had specially interesting conversations. One was a stalwart, hairy sub-officer. He was one of three brothers, and now all were wounded in this war. And was he married? No; but there was an old woman in some street or other in Stuttgart, and now that all her sons were down it might be bad times with her. The other "amputated" was a mere boy, handsome as a statue. I don't know whether it has struck others as it has me, that there are a great number of classically beautiful men among the Würtembergers. This lad was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. In both cases the Prince's hand went into his pocket, and came out with a gold piece. "Here, my man, send that to the mother, and let her know it comes from the Queen." In one ward were two amputation cases—one was a Frenchman, the other a Würtemberger. Both had burst out bleeding, and the orderlies were busy around them, pressing femoral arteries, picking up veins, and applying ice. The Frenchman was shrieking and yelling; the German lay silent, the drops of cold sweat on his forehead, and the muscles of his face working, but never a cry came from him. The spectacle illustrated one of the differences between the two nationalities. As he quitted each room, the Prince said a few simple words to the effect that he was commissioned by the King and Queen of Würtemberg to visit the wounded, and to thank them for their exertions on behalf of their country. The words, I fancy, and the visit did more good than any physic Dr. Biberstein could exhibit. All the occupants of this Lazareth are wounded men; there have been a few cases of typhus, but they have been sent to the rear. To quote the dry professional remark of Dr. Biberstein, "We have no time for typhus here."

From the other side of the circle of investment, from Versailles, the Special Correspondent at the Royal head-quarters wrote, on the 4th of December:—

The palace hospital has been nearly empty of late, for most of the patients brought in when the Prussians first arrived have either died or got well enough to travel home, and a large number of the wounded of October 21 have been similarly taken to the railway line or to the great burial mound in the

cemetery. There is a good deal of sickness, you may suppose, among such a crowd of soldiers. But, despite the rainy weather of last month and the severe cold which has now set in, I hear that the German troops continue to be in excellent health. They suffer from the cold, are drenched and made dismal by the rain, yet nevertheless they continue to be, as a body, well up to their work. More warm clothing would be an advantage to them, and the authorities are taking steps to supply the want, but it will not be possible to serve out as many sheepskin coats and blankets of extra thickness as days like yesterday and to-day seem to require.

The bitter weather which has ushered in the month of December must cause great suffering to the millions of Paris, with the known scarcity of fuel, and it makes the poverty of the surrounding country pinch all the more sorely. I have spoken of this poverty before. It has drawn forth the appeal of the Bishop of Versailles and his clergy to foreign charity; it has brought people of sufficient means in peace time to a state of destitution, and has opened a prospect of wretchedness for the coming winter which may appal the stoutest heart. No blame is laid in the Bishop's simple statement on any one in particular. The fact of the war is accepted as a starting point, and the incidents of suffering which it has caused are mentioned that, if possible, they may be relieved. Take, for example, the pensioners and other such persons of every degree, who have lived in the suburbs of the capital; take the cottagers turned adrift by the necessity of siege operations—many of them have become homeless by shells fired by their own countrymen—or consider how many artisans are thrown out of employ at the present time. We need not press the point of war losses, by requisition and contribution, to arrive at a total of suffering very hard to grapple with. The mere distribution of a pittance to those who have "known better days," as we phrase it, would be a work of unspeakable relief to hundreds whose cases have only to be known at home to meet with instant sympathy. They do not suffer because they have fallen from wealth to narrow means, but because from a life just tolerable, on a pension or an annuity, a life of rigid economy and small outlay, they have come to the verge of actually starving. I have been told of an aged gentleman, a member of one of the best families in France, who was lately found shivering over a scrap of fire with only money enough to buy bread, and not much of even that.

The great successes of the Germans on the Loire may bring the struggle abruptly to an end. But even then, in a case by no means certain to occur, there will be the mass of poverty and

distress round about Paris needing help as sorely as the distress of the capital itself. We ought to have food and fuel ready for them in abundance, if we wish to save our neighbours at the last pinch.

Dec. 5.—The second capture of Orleans by the Germans has been a ruinous affair for the Army of the Loire. If we make every allowance for the elastic energy of M. Gambetta, and for the zeal of the provinces, we have still an end for the time to all hope that Paris can be relieved. The Parisians must fight their own battle through the bitter winter weather, and must be quick in fighting it, too, or the besiegers will be reinforced by some of the German troops now on the Loire. We have been watching daily for a sortie such as has not been yet attempted, for a coming out *en masse* of all who wish to leave the city, and for the decisive battle of the siege somewhere near Boissy St. Leger. We have seen the weak point of the German line gradually strengthened until it has become the strongest point of all; have seen Trochu waited for with astounding completeness of preparation. He had a chance on the night of the 30th ultimo of breaking through towards the south-east, and getting away from Paris with some of his army. On the 1st instant there was still a possibility of bearing down the Würtembergers and their supports, for I do not think that the French in escaping on that day would have had to deal with one-half the number of Germans who now bar their passage. The delay may have arisen from internal causes, depending, I mean, on the state of Paris. But if it arose from a wish to hear the guns of D'Aurelle de Paladine thundering in the distance before the blow was struck from the capital, it was a fatal delay. Events have supplied us with a whole battery of after-wisdom on the subject, and a glance at the line of country to be passed over when the French shall finally come forth would discourage the stoutest of them.

In the bright hard weather which we have had for some days, it is not disagreeable to ride and walk about at noon, or even to walk briskly after the sun has set; but to bivouac on the frozen ground must be chilly work indeed. The ruined villages to the south-east of Paris are full of armed men, the roads are blocked with waggon-trains that supply food and forage, whilst long columns of cavalry may be seen winding towards the threatened spot. It is easy to go and easy to return on the hard-ringing horse-tracks through the fields, though the roads themselves are more like petrified furrows than anything else. It is easy to move over the ground now, but not easy to live on the probable scene of action. There is a scarcity of

accommodation even for the wounded, and a difficulty about stabling, which presses much more in winter time, as you may well suppose. Horses are brought into deserted parlours, and window-curtains torn down to form coverlets for the men. Furniture is obliged to be used as fuel, where it is of combustible stuff; and, in a word, this concentration of troops makes the besiegers suffer a good deal. They are tough fellows, accustomed to cold weather at home, and they have no lack of food, or it would go hard with them. One of the defects of the system of campaigning without tents and trusting to village quarters is, that when troops must crowd together there is, naturally, no place for the extra regiments, and they have to bivouac. What surprises me with the Prussians is, not that so many sleep under the wintry sky, but that such a number of them are stowed away in every possible and impossible hole and corner of a village. They have a talent for quartering themselves which cannot be surpassed.

And now that relief is hurled back beyond the Loire, if not rendered utterly hopeless, Paris stands once more alone, as she stood in September and October last. The great city and the great army round it are waiting for the end of the food on which the city lives. There is a probability of desperate fighting, but very little probability that the garrison will cut its way through. If it did, there would be then only a question of political consequences, not of military honour, to decide. Paris might surrender the next day with perfect satisfaction, and the war might become all the fiercer to the southward. This is what the Germans wish to prevent. They are so sure of victory that they desire to catch as many Frenchmen as possible.

Things have been quiet to-day, save for stray cannon-shots along the front. The French are said to have massed a large force on the oval within the great bend of the Marne, at and behind La Varenne, and they still hold Champigny, which was supposed to have been recovered on Friday morning. The fact is that, though driven in from some of the ground they seized on the 30th ultimo, they yet maintain two or three important points. Champigny, for instance, is a species of *tête de pont* to the position on the oval of La Varenne.

The garrison of Paris and the investing army were now equally impatient of the protracted siege, and each persuaded itself that it was the business of the other to put an end to a situation which grew more insupportable every day. The Correspondent at the King of Prussia's head-quarters wrote on the 17th of December:—

If I tell you of rumours of another French sortie, I am but repeating the familiar tale of this hereafter-to-be-famous siege. It is not "Going! going! gone!" as with an auctioneer, but "Coming! coming! come!" in regard to Trochu's men—only that the "come!" has fallen short in its effect up to this time. They have made brave efforts; but to come out of the charmed circle is just what they cannot manage. I can do no more than repeat that the Germans are ready, and that the French will have terribly hard work to break away. We hear no firing to-day, but that may be by reason of the wind. Some talk of an immediate attack by the besiegers on the French outworks as all but decided upon—in which case there would be plenty of noise, and plenty of loss too, between the rival artillerists; others hold to their theory that all the German work will be waiting and watching, and repulsing sorties, should any more be made. When I consider the present proportion between the strength of Paris as a fortress and the food for Paris as a city, it strikes me that an attack could only be made to satisfy the besieging troops, and not with the hope of greatly hastening the end.

That complete isolation of the two millions of people round whom the Germans have circled, is the danger most to be feared. Those deserted highways, and rusty rails, of which I spoke to you in a former letter, are significant of the strict blockade. Fancy Clapham Junction without a single train in the twenty-four hours, the gallant lads at the besiegers' outposts sitting behind barricades on the Old Kent Road, and the Camden Town goods station turned into a barrack. Fancy, by such analogies, the fatal belt about Paris. No stream of market carts, no milk trains, no cattle trains enter within the walls, and yet the daily consumption of everything must be enormous. When all has been eaten which is fit for food, and much that men would ordinarily shrink from, there will remain nothing for Paris but submission, unless General Trochu can raise the siege. If it were wise in the beginning for Count Moltke to wait and watch, it would seem still to be so. There is little likelihood of trouble at present from the Army of the Loire, and little doubt but that the German reinforcements will keep pace with the strengthening of Trochu's army by constant drill.

The different scenes upon my journey round the city make up a picture of this stirring time not soon to be forgotten. Here is an outpost watching the south of Paris from the high ground to the right of Meudon. The men are Bavarians, and their crested helmets look somewhat the worse for wear. They have made themselves comfortable behind a ruined wall, which

serves partly to keep away the wind, partly to hide them from the French gunners. It is evident that shells have become matters of course to them; for, though they jump under cover and crouch down when the whizzing sound is heard in the air, they resume their former employment, whatever it may have been, as soon as the danger has passed. There is just a chuckle over *die Franzosen*, who are declared to be stupid fellows to waste so much ammunition, and then feet are stamped or hands are thumped upon the breast, and we agree that it is bitter cold. These French shells do less mischief than the shells of the Germans, for, though they detonate and burst with loud explosion on reaching the ground, they are so made as to break into fewer fragments than the German shells, and thus they kill and wound fewer men, and the shivering men on watch laugh at them as engines of death. It would not be so, perhaps, if there were an object to fire at. A bombardment would give the French a chance of hitting somebody with their guns.

The deputation of the North German Parliament arrived last night to congratulate King William on the change of title which impends. There is almost as much of political black coat wearing to be seen in the hotel dining-rooms of Versailles, and at the corners of the streets, as of staff uniforms. The grave, sober gentlemen in fur collars and spectacles are seemingly quite at home in the temporary capital of the new Empire.

Dec. 18.—A funeral occurred yesterday in Versailles a little unlike the ordinary run of funerals, from the Palace Hospital, yet with the form of procession that has become familiar to the inhabitants by the sad frequency of its repetition. There was the slow moving escort of Prussian infantry, and the solemn music of a Prussian band, leading the way to the grave. Then followed a coffin, which bore a tricolour flag, with the red cap and sword of a French officer, and many a laurel-wreath laid on it by friendly hands. The body of Lieutenant Godard, of the French 42nd Regiment, was carried to its last resting-place by a squad of *infirmiers*, who serve the wounded here among their foes. Persons of all sorts were present to do honour to the deceased. General von Voigts-Rhetz, Commandant of Versailles, walked sternly behind the coffin, in full uniform and wearing all his decorations; with him were German officers and French civilians, French officers, apparently prisoners, and the native officials of the town. M. Rameau, the Mayor, was to be seen close to the Prussian commandant, and a crowd of well-to-do townsfolk attended in deep mourning. The young lieutenant had fallen badly

wounded in the sortie of December 2, and after lingering in great agony for many days, had died in a village at some distance from Versailles. He belonged to one of the most respected families in the town, and his relatives had hastened over to soothe his last moments with their sorrowing care. Alas! he had suffered very bitterly, for he fell in such a place that it was not easy to get to him, and he lay, as I hear, from the 2nd to the 5th of December, in the severe cold which at that time prevailed, and the wonder is that he was alive when they finally brought him in, though his legs were frozen, and he lingered for nearly a week before his release. It is but one case among many. Thousands have so suffered before Paris and on the banks of the Loire; but when the story is brought home to us by an instance of a particular person, it seems too horrible to be true. To lie there night after night, helpless and freezing, is a mournful end for all the hopes of a first campaign—a heavy price, but not too great a price, to pay for the safety of the Fatherland. How many Frenchmen and Germans have been gladly paying it during the past few days!

Lieutenant Godard was borne from the church to the cemetery, and was lowered into the grave in presence of a silent crowd. The funeral address was pronounced by a French medical officer, whose name I did not catch, and M. Rameau, the Mayor, added a word or two of the kind which in less stirring times might be deemed a formal exhortation to be a good citizen. But now-a-days the merest scrap of allusion to passing events is eagerly caught at, and the people round the grave could not suppress an indistinct cry of applause when such sentiments were uttered. There was, however, no further sign of feeling. Order was not disturbed, and the Prussians had no cause to regret the courtesy which they had shown to a fallen foe. The French would not, and could not, forgive them their invasion; but they might own that the sad fate of the young lieutenant had been pitied by those whom he had bravely opposed.

We had an arrival on Friday afternoon which caused no small sensation among the "Britishers" at Versailles. Not the deputation of the North German Parliament, bringing an address to King William; not the Queen's Messenger, bringing despatches to Mr. Odo Russell. Both deputation and Queen's Messenger have safely arrived; but we had something more exciting to distract our thoughts at the particular time to which I have referred. It was a matter of arrest—a matter almost too comical to be believed, but very vexatious and offensive to the persons chiefly concerned. You are ready

with a suggestion of the old, old story. "Correspondents arrested?" you inquire, with a cruel smile. Yes, truly, but that is not all, and it is not the old story by any means. When the prisoners were brought into Versailles on Friday afternoon, they were taken to the Hôtel de France, where are the head-quarters of General von Voights-Rhetz, and were quickly released at the intercession of General Walker, our military attaché. They were released on a promise to appear again if wanted, and were not wanted and did not appear again. The thing was a mistake, a gross blunder of the Prussian Commandant of Etampes, and there ought to have been no arrest at all. This is how it happened. Captain Keith Fraser, who had been doing good work for the wounded on the Loire, and two English correspondents, those of the *Illustrated London News* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, were travelling from Orleans to Versailles, when they halted at Etampes to pass the night. Here they met Captain Hozier, the assistant to General Walker in his mission with the Prussians, and here the whole party—including another gentleman who was with Captain Hozier—dined together at the hotel. There was something suspicious in this meeting of foreigners, something which must have aroused the Commandant's curiosity. From whatever cause he began to suspect, he ended by making what must have seemed a great haul. The foreigners were detained. Even Captain Hozier's presence, and his personal assurance that he knew the others to be the persons named in the passes which they severally carried, did not satisfy the Commandant. He allowed Captain Hozier with his friend to proceed southward, after a day's delay, and he sent the three gentlemen bound to Versailles, northward, under an escort of dragoons. You may fancy that it was much more amusing to hear of their being roused up at 6 A.M., and having to start without their coffee because the escort was impatient, than it could possibly have been to them to experience the journey. No great harm was done, and we could laugh over the adventure with the victims when they were once more free. But the annoyance they had suffered was really too bad for men with their passports in order. *Surtout pas trop de zèle*, might well have been said to the Commandant of Etampes.

Not only are the members of the deputation from the German Parliament ready in Versailles to present their address to the King to-day, but the great change in the style and title of Germany, the change from a Royal to an Imperial crown, is expected to lead to a more brilliant gathering than has yet been seen at head-quarters. Their Majesties of Saxony, and

Bavaria, and Württemberg may even arrive, and offer their congratulations in person to the future Emperor. It is strange that, with a mighty army of their Republican enemies so near at hand, the Germans should have a position which enables them to transact this matter in perfect calmness. "Alarms, excursions, to them enter Trochu and his army," would make a bad stage direction for the pageant, so the Germans in the outposts must keep vigilant watch.

Dec. 19.—That great avenue of the courtly city, with its leafless trees, and its side alleys trampled from grass to mud by many horse-hoofs, is becoming rich in German history. The history of the Prince's coming, and of the warm dusty afternoon in October when King William drove to the Préfecture, may be set down among the events of the war. Generals-in-Chief must go to some new head-quarters with each forward march that they make, and there must be a certain interest in such moves as part of a great drama. But these conquering Germans are a nation on the march. Clerks and secretaries, Ministers of State, and Royal Dukes, follow the course of the campaign. Telegraph lines are laid down, military railways are organized, and the quarters of the Soldier King, for three months straight on end, will be looked back to as a German capital *in partibus*. The Préfecture on the great avenue of Versailles has seen many a diplomat come and go, has witnessed the arrivals and departures of those who negotiated the union of Germany, and has been visited again and again by the iron Chancellor in his ripening triumph. It needed but a Parliamentary deputation to fill in the historical picture of 1870. Grave, earnest representatives of the German people should come among the Princes and Generals to take part in the mighty work of the time—in a better work than that of punishing France—namely, that of uniting Germany. The punishment may or may not have a lasting effect, but the union of the "Fatherland" will be an "accomplished fact" long before the ruined French villages have been rebuilt.

The deputation of the North German Parliament, headed by Herr Simson, its veteran President, travelled leisurely to Versailles. At Strasburg, the deputies were entertained by Count Bismarck Bohlen, at a grand banquet of more than ninety covers. At Bar-le-Duc, the Bavarian soldiers, who had received a barrel of genuine Baierisches Bier, begged their North German friends the deputies to drink the Emperor's health in this characteristic beverage. Then came the arrival at Lagny, and the drive, in any and every sort of carriage, to Versailles. The deputies were not fortunate as sightseers

when they passed along the south-east front of Paris, for no sortie took place to give them a taste of war. They reached head-quarters in safety, were to be seen "largely on hand," as it is expressed by Western men, at the Hôtel des Réservoirs, and were organized in procession yesterday afternoon to proceed to the Préfecture.

Vulgar little French boys stared at these new-come politicians without the respect which clanking swords and brass-topped helmets impose upon the young mind. But though I heard many sneers in the street at the odd equipages of *ces messieurs*, as they dashed by—conquered people will have their word about the conquerors—yet the tone of more serious Frenchmen seemed to be, "Do as you like. Have an Empire, or whatever else you choose; the thing is your affair, and," added one whom I heard, "we French have had enough of Empires for a long time."

The weather was fine, and a crowd had collected before the Préfecture. Over the centre of the building was the Prussian Royal standard—the black cross on a ground of gold and purple—and about the gateway were hundreds of curious Prussians, off duty, waiting to see the deputies pass. There was no music before the King's quarters, but a few cannon-shot heard booming from Paris brought home the strange realities of the scene. May this Empire be peace—as Napoleon's never was—though it is founded in the midst of war! Hark to the boom of the guns of those rash Republicans! What troubled days they may have in the future, even when the invaders have gone home! The German system seems to promise greater strength. There is to be one country and one flag for the land of so many princes, for they waive their claims in favour of the greatest among them, and offer him an Imperial crown. Listen to the music of yonder detachment which marches down the avenue—no better time could be chosen to ask with brazen throat, "What is the German's Fatherland?" The answer is ready.

Inside the Préfecture of Versailles is a handsome room filled with bright uniforms, with helmets, and ribbons, and crosses. The King stands near the fireplace, and the generals and princes, the deputies and staff officers, circle round an open space where stands Herr Simson to read the address of the Parliament. Herr Simson has the faculty of being a Parliamentary leader. As such, in 1849, he offered an Imperial crown to the King of Prussia, the brother of King William. Events have ripened. Prussia is not now where she then was. See how proudly Bismarck glances round the brilliant circle! Listen as the Soldier King replies, with tones of

deep emotion! He accepts what his countrymen desire him to accept. He is to be Emperor. But the title of King will be maintained as well, and the other higher title will not be assumed until the South German people have expressed the wish which South German princes have already made known.

The Special Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Saxony's army saw the same deputation at Lagny, on the 20th of December, as it was returning to Germany, and thus describes the interview:—

Between Pomponne and Lagny I was amusing myself by noting the variety of railway lines from which the carriages composing a single reserve train had been drafted—Berg, Hanover, Taunus, Halle-Cassel, Westfalen, Saxe, and half a dozen more, when I observed a half troop of Blue Hussars on the other side of the water coming at a trot down to the Kreys-brücke. The horsemen were followed by a string of carriages, which were closed up by another half troop of Dragoons. What could it mean? Was the King fulfilling the frantic prognostications of the Hamburg merchant, whose ravings I reported the other day, and flying to Rheims in twelve two-horse post-waggons? Had Trochu yielded himself up on the sly, and was he off to Wilhelmshöhe *via* Lagny and Bouillon, after the manner of his quondam Imperial master? Had the Crown Princess been on a flying visit to her Royal and gallant husband, and been warned out of Versailles by “Big Josceline”? How could I tell? None the more could I understand the *raison d'être* of the procession when the escort and the post-waggons came past me at a trot. I saw faces not wont to be seen on the war-path—faces grave with thought, attenuated by long watching over the midnight lamp—civilian faces and dresses in every carriage. Although I did not express myself audibly, I shared the sentiment of the honest Landwehrman in the gutter, who bluntly roared out to one of the postilions, “I wish you'd tell me who the devil you have got there?” The man's quaint coolness reminded me of an Ost Preussen *marketender*, who, passing during the memorable interview between the ex-Emperor and Bismarck after Sedan, bawled out lustily, “Where is that Napoleon?” The *cortège* whirled on, and I rode after it, but was accidentally so delayed that the waggons had discharged their freight in front of the Lagny Railway Station some time before I got there. Very hungry, and with a trust in the chapter of accidents, begotten of some experience, to purvey somehow the information I needed, I turned aside to the “officers' casino”—a modest eating-room, on the mess principle, estab-

lished opposite the station. The place was full of the faces I had seen in the carriages. The owners of the faces were hard at work—very. Sausage, ham, cold meat were disappearing with creditable rapidity; the wine gurgled from the bottles, and a silence reigned such as is wont to exist among very hungry men. No wonder that they were hungry: the thirty civilians I saw before me, in the fur coats, the fur caps, and some indeed in fur boots, one man with white moustaches, many of them with bald heads, and other signs and tokens of “grave and reverend seigneurs,” were the deputation of the North German Reichstag, who were on their way home from Versailles, after tendering to King William the crown and title of Emperor of Germany. It was a strange sight—no bad emblem of a nation which loves peace, while it never shuns righteous war. Here, in the low-browed, narrow room, waited on by soldiers in canvas undress, whose straw beds were visible in the kitchen, as the door stood open, interspersed with officers in uniform—here a general, there a lieutenant, the street in front crowded with the wounded of two nations and half a dozen principalities, its stones echoing to the din of galloping orderlies, to the rattle of *marketender* carts, and the roll of tumbrels; here sat the fathers in Israel, men wise in council—men famous in literature—men whose names are a tower of strength on every Bourse in Europe. When has a Parliament been seen on campaign before? I can recall no later instance than when the Council of the Covenant went with the Covenanting fighting men into the field—themselves, too, fighting men. Truly this modern Parliament on campaign took to the *rôle* very kindly, to judge by the good knives and forks they played. Having the honour to be recognized by one of the members—Baron Rothschild, I was most courteously requested to take a seat at one of the tables. The Baron, in urbanity and geniality, is a host in himself; at the same table sat the following members of the deputations:—President Simson, Landrath von Cranach, Dr. Weigel, Herr Puttkamer, Baron Nordeck, Count Hompesch, Herr von Sybel, and Herr Sombart. They told me, with much feeling, how the tears had trickled down King William’s cheeks when the grandest proffer of the age was made to him. They expressed with hearty warmth their pleasure that, when the time came that William’s son should reign in his stead, the Princess Royal of England should be Empress of Germany; and before Herr Director came to say that the train was ready, one toast was drunk, and in that all the room joined with acclamation—“Prosperity to Germany and England: may they ever be

friendly!" Baron Nordeck 'it was who gave the toast. And then "the house adjourned" into the snug first-class carriages. I could not help being amused at the gentleman who was charged with the duty of settling the reckoning. It was stiff, unquestionably—164 thalers for a simple cold luncheon for 31 persons. No doubt the casino keeper would have replied to a complaint to the same effect as a Scotch change-house keeper is reported to have used to James VI.: "Ye dinna come this gate ilka day, your Majesty." Certainly it is not often that a Lagny *marketender* gets a chance of cutting into the purse of the German Reichstag. The paymaster was disposed to grumble, but I ventured to point out that it was all, so to speak, in the family, since the man was a German, and since Germany was paying the costs of the delegation—a view which the good deputy, perhaps, all the readier adopted, because his colleagues, getting through before him, were picking up all the best seats in the train. The deputation goes to-night as far as Epernay, where, in its corporate capacity, it breaks up. I was forced to resist a very cordial invitation to accompany it as far as the city of Champagne, but my duties called me elsewhere. An officer who accompanied the delegation in an official capacity had with him a cage containing a Paris carrier-pigeon, which had been captured with its despatch, and which he was conveying home as a present to Princess Charles of Prussia, the sister of Queen Augusta.

Yesterday two hundred sailors passed through Lagny on their way to man the gunboats on the Loire, captured from the French. The men, who were mostly from Kiel and the vicinity, were in splendid spirits, and were fine specimens of bearded tars. The gunboats are to be used in further operations against the French on the Loire.

CHAPTER XV.

By the middle of December the Pigeon had come to be considered in Paris as a sacred bird. It was the boast of the investors that not a mouse could enter or leave Paris without their permission; but they could neither hinder the escape of pigeons from the beleaguered capital, nor wholly prevent the besieged from receiving communication from the world without. It was, however, the pigeon, and the pigeon only, that could carry from the departments into the capital messages over which the enemy could exercise no censorship or control. The pigeon

carried under its wing the letter that raised the hopes of two millions of people, or plunged them in momentary despair; and one of the most plaintive of the laments that were sent from Paris was, "We have had no pigeon for eight days." It must, however, be admitted that this admirable bird did not always fulfil the expectations that had been formed of it. As the winter season advanced, and the days became shorter, the number of messages despatched, but not received, sensibly increased. It appeared that the birds avoided night-work, and would only fly as long as they could see their way. Thus it became necessary, in the south of France, to have them conveyed northwards, and let loose as near as possible to the capital, so that they might be sure to arrive before dark. When this precaution was omitted, they frequently went to roost, and forgot to continue their journey on the following day. Some, it was found, had been beguiled on their way by the hospitality of rural dove-cots, and others fell a prey to the Prussian hawk, or the heedless sportsman. It was owing to some such cause, probably, that a message, which M. Gambetta sent from Bourges on the 14th of December, did not reach Paris before the 20th of that month. It was in the following terms:—

"GAMBETTA À JULES FAVRE ET TROCHU.

"*Bourges, Dec. 14.*

"During four days I have been here, occupied with Bourbaki, reorganizing the three Corps, 15th, 18th, and 20th, of the First Army of the Loire, severely cut up by the forced marches and heavy rains following the evacuation of Orleans. This work will take some four or five days more to complete.

"The positions occupied by Bourbaki cover both Nevers and Bourges.

"The other portion of the army, after the occupation of Orleans, retired on Beaugency and Marchenoir—positions which it has retained against all the efforts of Prince Frederick Charles, thanks to the great energy of General Chanzy, who seems *le véritable homme de guerre révélé par les dernières événements*.

"The army, composed of the 16th, 17th, and 21st Corps, and supported by all the forces of the West, according to the orders of General Trochu, executed an admirable retreat, with very heavy losses to the Prussians. Chanzy stole away by a movement turning Frederick Charles on the left bank of the Loire at Blois and Amboise. Chanzy is in perfect security, ready to take the offensive against . . . when his troops are rested, after having fought splendidly against superior numbers from the 30th November to the 12th December.

"You thus see the Army of the Loire is far from being destroyed, according to the lies of the Prussians. It is separated into two equal forces ready to operate, one on . . . the other . . . so as to march on . . ."

The Paris journals exulted over this excellent news, though none of them ventured to explain it. The Besieged Resident wrote:—"The optimists say it means that Bourbaki and Chanzy have surrounded Frederick Charles; the pessimists say that Frederick Charles has got between them."

The King of Prussia had anticipated it by a few days in the following General Order:—

"Soldiers of the Confederate German Armies!—We have again arrived at a crisis of the war. When I last addressed you, the last of the hostile armies which at the commencement of the campaign confronted us had, by the capitulation of Metz, been destroyed. The enemy has since, by extraordinary exertions, opposed to us newly-formed troops, and a large portion of the inhabitants of France have forsaken their peaceful, and by us unhindered, vocations in order to take up arms. The enemy was frequently superior to us in numbers, but you have nevertheless again defeated him, for valour and discipline and confidence in a righteous cause are worth more than numerical preponderance. All attempts of the enemy to break through the investment lines of Paris have been firmly repulsed, often, indeed, with many bloody sacrifices, as at Champigny and at Le Bourget, but with a heroism such as you have everywhere displayed towards him. The armies of the enemy, which were advancing from every direction to the relief of Paris, have all been defeated. Our troops, some of whom only a few weeks ago stood before Metz and Strasburg, have to-day advanced as far as Rouen, Orleans, and Dijon, and, among many smaller victorious engagements, two new important battles—those of Amiens and the several days' fight at Orleans—have been added to our former triumphs. Several fortresses have been conquered, and much war material has been taken. I have reason, therefore, for the greatest satisfaction, and it is to me a gratification and a duty to express this to you. I thank you all, from the General to the common soldier. Should the enemy persist in a further prosecution of the war, I know you will continue to show that exertion of all your powers to which we owe our great success hitherto, until we wring from him an honourable peace, worthy of the great sacrifices of blood and life which have been offered up.

"WILLIAM.

"*Head-quarters, Versailles, Dec. 6, 1870.*"

Although King William's language was fully warranted, M. Gambetta also had ground for the hopes he held out to Paris. It is true that, a week before the Parisians received the despatch, General Chanzy had retired to Le Mans, to repair his losses and re-form his army; but his troops, nevertheless, had fought in a manner to deserve his commendations, and to justify the expectation that, under favourable circumstances, they would be able once more to resume their forward march. The *Moniteur* had announced that, "in consequence of the recent military events on the Loire and the evacuation of Orleans," the Government had decided on the formation of two distinct armies, to operate in the two regions separated by the course of the river, "thus preserving means of effecting a junction with Paris, which was the immediate and supreme object in view."

In accordance with these intentions, new appointments were announced. General Bourbaki was named commander-in-chief of the First, and General Chanzy commander-in-chief of the Second, Army of the Loire. The military events referred to in the official journal were sufficiently obvious. Chanzy, with the 16th and 17th Corps, had been cut off from Orleans before the occupation of the city on the 4th of December, and compelled to retire clear of it to the south-west. The 18th and 20th Corps had gone up the river as Chanzy had gone down it, and the 15th Corps had retreated through Orleans upon Bourges, where subsequently the 18th and 20th Corps joined it, after a ten days' march. The formation of these Corps into two armies would have been a wise measure, had France had a generalissimo capable of combining their movements after the division of the general command. They had two several bases, south and west, each of which it was necessary to retain, and there was no reason why they should not act in concert. But, as we shall see, by the time that Bourbaki's army was in a condition to march, the "immediate and supreme object in view"—the "effecting of a junction with Paris"—was lost sight of. Bourbaki was sent away to the east, and Chanzy, so far from being able to go to Paris, was attacked and overthrown on the Sarthe.

The Ministers further announced the abandonment of Tours as the seat of the delegate Government, it being, under the circumstances of the hour, the most important point to prevent the freedom of the two armies from being impeded in any way whatever by political or administrative considerations. Therefore, as the proximity of the seat of Government at Tours might hinder the operations of the two armies, it had been decided that the whole of the Government offices should be transferred to Bordeaux, which, owing to the facilities of communication which it offered both by land and sea with the rest of France, afforded

precious resources for the organization of the army and the continuance of the work of the national defence.

The Correspondent at Tours wrote from that city, on the 5th of December:—

M. Gambetta left Tours yesterday afternoon by a special train for Orleans. On arriving near the village of La Chapelle, about ten miles from Orleans, his train ran into a barricade which had been hastily thrown across the line by the enemy. At the same time some Uhlans lying in ambush fired upon him. He escaped almost by a miracle. He was very severely shaken by the shock of the collision with the barricade, and his private secretary, M. Spuller, was still more hurt. M. Gambetta got back on foot to Beaugency, where he took a carriage to Ecouis, in the hope of there getting some news from Orleans, but he could find none. He then made his way to Blois, where at nine yesterday evening he received from Tours, forwarded by M. de Freycinet, the following disheartening despatch:—

“I had hoped up to the last moment not to evacuate Orleans; but all my efforts were useless. I shall evacuate to-night.”

This laconic announcement reached Tours at half-past six last night, and was the only communication made by General d'Aurelle since the one six hours earlier, which promised that he would obey his orders and defend the place.

M. Gambetta returned to Tours at half-past three this morning, and then had the grief to learn that Orleans had been evacuated at midnight. He had the poor and only consolation of being told that the retreat was effected in “good order;” but from General d'Aurelle he has up to this moment had no further news whatever. The disaster is tremendous. The gallant Admiral Jauréguiberry was in command of eighty-five splendid naval guns, in admirable position, at Chevilly. When the order was brought by an aide-de-camp to retreat, he refused positively. I am now speaking from a despatch signed by him which I have seen. He said, “I can't retire; I have my guns here in a capital position to defend the town. I can't take them away, and I will stick to them unless I get a written order from the general commanding-in-chief to go away.” The written order speedily came, and then Jauréguiberry, with a heavy heart, spiked all those guns which had been collected with infinite trouble and expense by M. Gambetta's care. What makes the calamity the more galling is, that the Germans, when they occupied Orleans

for the second time, are said to have had scarcely any ammunition at all. D'Aurelle is said to have retreated in two lines upon Bourges and Vierzon. Nothing but the last extremity of necessity could have justified him in going so far away from Paris at a moment when any support, however slight, from the Army of the Loire, would have been of priceless importance.

An Irish lady with whom I was acquainted thirty years ago, and who inhabited a manor house somewhere in the wilds of Sligo, used to say, "Whenever the servants talk to me of ghosts, I begin to look out for housebreakers." Likewise, whenever I hear of miracles, my first impulse is to see what knavery they hide. I have an instinctive feeling that they are made to order by the political intriguers, just as fascines and gabions are constructed to forward siege works. This detective propensity of mine has had full play since I came to Tours. Since Titus besieged Jerusalem, miracles were never of such frequent occurrence. Miraculous voices are heard at La Salette which warn the faithful against the Man of Sedan and the ally of Garibaldi, whom I take to be Gambetta. A Bishop formally certifies to the authenticity of these voices. The *Français*, which represents the shade of orthodoxy headed by the Bishop of Orleans, and the *Union*, whose inspirations are derived from the Gesu and the Château of Frohsdorf, vie with each other in making their readers acquainted with miracle workers, and nuns and peasant girls endowed with the gift of prophecy. The former journal, which counts several Academicians among its editors, descants with classic elegance on the miraculous properties of an altar in the cathedral of Orleans, before which Jeanne d'Arc saw a vision of the Virgin Mary. D'Aurelle de Paladine had the weakness, with the principal members of his staff, to go and venerate some relics on this altar, amid all the pomp and circumstance of a military mass. This religious manifestation was taken by those of his soldiers who read the *Siècle* as a political demonstration and an evidence of treasonable intentions towards the Republic—an opinion which was strengthened by a nun having predicted that the younger Bourbons would bow to the elder branch, and that when Henri V. had saved France, Louis Philippe II. would succeed him and renew his baptismal vows in the church of Orleans. As D'Aurelle de Paladine never cried "Vive la République," his Voltairean army naturally thought he was a traitor, whose mission it was to get them massacred. After what I have seen of the enthusiasm of the Mobiles here, I cannot otherwise explain the despatch in which he informed Gambetta

that they were ill disposed to go forward. But to continue with my miracles. The *Union* takes to itself credit for having discovered another Jeanne d'Arc, whose supernatural qualities are attested by a Bishop. As the *Union* looks forward to a miraculous birth at Frohsdorf, it does not care to accept the Orleans nun, who predicts a fusion of the Legitimist and Orleans interests. Judge, then, how it hugs its *trouvaille*, and cackles over it. Here is the full, true, and particular account of the modern Jeanne d'Arc, as furnished by the *Union*: "We introduce to our readers a holy maid in the service of a Christian family, strict in the observance of their religious duties. A great many legendary things concerning this marvellous being are circulated, which in various essential respects differ from the precise information we are in a position to give. It is said, in some parts of France, that she belongs to Macon, and in others to the parish of Ars, which is celebrated through the sanctity and miraculous powers of its *curé*, the Abbé Vianey. The young girl in question saw visions from an early age. She latterly received an order from the Virgin to proceed to Paris, and give certain warnings to General Trochu. The Virgin appeared to her several days in succession. Troubled by these renewed visitations, the girl consulted her mistress, who consulted the *curé*, who consulted, as he was bound, the Bishop of Belley. Monseigneur Langellerie, after carefully weighing the circumstances submitted to him, gave the young girl leave to set out on her mission, the exact nature of which, she declared, would only be revealed to her by a matron of respectable appearance, whom the Virgin would direct to meet her at the gates of Paris, and who would tell her what she was to say to General Trochu. The girl accomplished her mysterious journey. But little has transpired of what passed in her interview with Trochu, beyond some revelations she made to the General of events that were on the point of taking place. She told him, at the moment she entered his presence, that the French had entered Orleans, though it was impossible for her to have known it by natural means. She also predicted a victorious sortie, which would be followed by depressing news; that the Prussians would not occupy Macon; and that the King of Prussia was destined never to re-enter Berlin." The *Union* does not treat us to the history of the modern Jeanne d'Arc's passage through the Prussian lines before Paris. But it refers us to a thirty-centime pamphlet, in which it is related, with many other miraculous incidents of the holy maid's journey.

December 8.—The *France* profits by the disaster at Orleans to

make a great onslaught upon M. Gambetta. "Personal power," it observes, "can only be justified by success. Now what, after all, has M. Gambetta achieved since he has been Minister of War? Under his administration Metz, Schelestadt, Breisach, Thionville, and La Fère have capitulated; and the enemy, besides occupying Amiens, Rouen, and Orleans, has invested Belfort, threatened Lyons and Besançon, and nearly doubled the diameter of the circle of its occupation." The conclusion of the *France* therefore is, that it is high time for M. Gambetta to distrust his own powers and take to himself a "Council of Government," meaning the knot of ex-deputies at the Hôtel de Bordeaux and the Hôtel de l'Univers, who want an Assembly to be elected forthwith. The *France* quite overlooks the herculean efforts of M. Gambetta, which, in the short space of two months, have produced armies whose warlike appearance astonishes all observers. But if practical results do not speedily come, Gambetta is likely to be held responsible for failure.

Tours is about to be relegated to its natural dulness. No longer will M. Glais-Bizoin astonish ordinary mortals by his condescension over matutinal coffee in the Café de la Ville. No longer will Crémieux, the Israelite, attract crowds at the gates of the palace of an ultramontane archbishop, whose hospitality he enjoyed. No longer will Gambetta take his constitutional walk after breakfast in the gardens of the Préfecture, while generals, cap in hand, attend him one after the other to know whether they are to be promoted, reprimanded, or dismissed. No longer will people fight and intrigue to get a place at the *table d'hôte* of the Hôtel du Faisan. No longer will the Rue Royale, which in ordinary times shows like the High Street of a dull country town, be as crowded as Cheapside at noon. And no longer will certain hotel-keepers and shopkeepers take as much money in a day as they usually do in a month.

The laconic official news from the theatre of war on the Loire I cannot read as very cheering. It is not much to say that General Chanzy, after having been "twice attacked, has maintained his position," and is "able to sustain the honour of our arms." I hear terrible stories about not only regiments but a general running away. The general is said to have been placed under arrest. I continue to think that France ought to be able to expel the invader; but if officers and men won't fight, she may be crushed. In that case the oppression of the conqueror will be so terrible that France will no longer be a nation worth belonging to; and if I were a Frenchman, I should certainly share the feelings of many friends of mine, who say

that if Prussia takes Paris they will emigrate to Switzerland or America.

A great many ex-deputies here, MM. Cochery, Lefebvre, Guizot, Montpeyroux, Wilson, Houssard, de Civrac, de Barante, Alfred Le Roux, Roy, de Louly, &c., have been laying their heads together against Gambetta. A deputation of them recently went in a body to the *Constitutionnel* office, where they proclaimed that the continuation of the war was all nonsense; that France had nothing to do but make peace on the best terms that the enemy would give her; that Gambetta ought to be dethroned from his dictatorship, and a Constituent Assembly at once elected. They wished the *Constitutionnel* to publish a manifesto, which they brought ready cut and dried. Although the *Constitutionnel* is a journal still conducted by the old Imperialist staff, and is very hostile to the Republic, the editor, who received this deputation, categorically refused to have anything to do with the manifesto, and told the deputation that if they wished to protest against M. Gambetta, they must do it their own way. Thus foiled in one mode of assault they tried another, and carried their bill of indictment to the Préfecture, where one of M. Gambetta's secretaries, out of courtesy to them as ex-deputies, requested them to come at two in the afternoon for an answer. When they called again they were simply told that M. Gambetta had nothing whatever to say to them. In point of fact they are nobodies. The quality of an ex-Imperialist deputy manifestly confers no status whatever above that of any other citizen.

The terrible lists of military executions of private soldiers which daily appear in the *Moniteur*, and which examples of severity may be very necessary, provoke the observation that one very seldom hears of the punishment of officers, and yet there is an appalling amount of testimony that very many officers behave ill before the enemy. A captain of cavalry of the 15th Corps, now a prisoner, has been cashiered in his absence, for having failed to join his squadron when it received marching orders on the occasion of the first evacuation of Orleans, and thereby allowing himself voluntarily to be made a prisoner. Soldiers will ask why sentence of death is not recorded against this captain. Perhaps, however, he only over-slept himself, and did not mean to be absent on parade.

I have seen one of Garibaldi's staff officers (a Frenchman) who was present at the audacious attempt to retake Dijon by night, and had his horse killed under him and a bullet through his kepi. He told me, with tears in his eyes, that he had lived to see Italians fight well, and the French soldiers, who

should have seconded them, run away. Had it not been for the faint-heartedness of the Mobiles there is every probability that the enterprise would have succeeded. My informant speaks in the highest terms of Menotti Garibaldi and his brigade. A great many Garibaldians are men of fortune and high position, who have made immense sacrifices to join his standard; among these are General Frappoli, Colonel Lobbia, and M. Mauro-Macchi, all three deputies who resigned their seats to take service. Then there are MM. Podio, Bizzoni, Beghelli, and Castellazzo, well-known journalists. A Spanish nobleman, Orense, Marquis d'Albaida, is in the ranks, with 300 volunteers, and there are fully 300 Greeks equipped at their own expense. M. Charles Tamburini, the son of the great singer, has left his family and his comfortable home in London to share the hardships of the Garibaldians. I saw the other day in Tours, wearing the uniform of a Garibaldian, Captain Fra Panteleo, the celebrated monk who led troops in Sicily with a sword in one hand and a crucifix in the other. He has come here because he could not get on with Colonel Bordone, who, it appears, is obnoxious to many of Garibaldi's most devoted followers. Panteleo is a man in the prime of life, with a round face, and short, thick, light brown whiskers. In a clerical dress he would look a "burly priest."

I have just come from visiting the ambulance in the Palais de Justice. The Salle des Pas Perdus was occupied with soldiers with slight arm and head wounds and dysentery. In the hall, where the historical High Court acquitted Pierre Bonaparte, were lying on chaff litter those who had been badly mutilated in the fighting before Orleans. There were only three beds in the place, and they were occupied by men in an almost hopeless condition. A groan was now and then audible, but the patients, who were lying down, seemed as a general rule too exhausted to utter a sound of any kind. The witnesses' benches were occupied by poor wretches who had neither blanket nor mattress between them and the hard boards. The only pillows they had were their knapsacks. It was shocking to see bandaged heads so badly bolstered. As I was walking from one extremity to the other of the hall, a French lady, whose dexterity in attending to wounds and well simulated cheerfulness I had noticed, came up and asked me if I had any old trousers or shirts to give away, because they were very badly wanted by some of the invalids. She showed me one man who was surrounded by a surgeon and three Sisters of Charity. He had several body wounds, from which they were trying to cut away with little scissors what remained of a nether garment. It was plastered to him with

coagulated blood. Inside of the bar there were freshly-arrived invalids, on whom the white-robed sisters were operating with sponges and warm water. Last March this space was partially occupied by journalists who had come to witness Pierre Bonaparte's trial, and the wives of the judges and great functionaries of the department of the Indre-et-Loire. A fainting Mobile leant against the bar where *mouchards* gave their suborned evidence, and on which Henri Rochefort placed his nicely-gloved hand as he uttered his well-pondered and very effective sarcasms. An old and a middle-aged woman knelt beside a dying man on the very spot where Laurier and Floquet pleaded. I suppose they were near relatives who had just found him out. Their cheeks were scalded with tears, and one of them seemed to be reciting the prayer *pour les agonisants*. She struck her breast repeatedly as her lips moved. I was curious to see by whom the *banc des accusés* was occupied. It is a sort of pew, in which the green cushion placed in it for the benefit of the homicide of Auteuil still remains. A Franc-tireur was lying on the seat, and another was sitting on the floor with his back propped up by the partition dividing it from the compartment where the Corsican colonels and majors sat who were charged with the difficult task of controlling the violent temper of the Emperor's cousin. Those Francs-tireurs' hoods, which had the appearance of monks' cowls, were drawn over their heads, so that it was impossible for me to see their faces. The daughter-in-law of the Countess de Flavigny, and a lady who said her son was fighting under General Chanzy, distributed the clothing to soldiers who were strong enough to come and ask for a change of linen or a pair of stockings. I remarked to them and the nuns the necessity of clearing away the chaff litter from the passages between the files of wounded. The irritating dust which this litter occasioned visibly affected the soldiers suffering from chest wounds, and brought on internal hæmorrhage. But the ladies seemed to think it nobody's business either to clear away the litter or open the windows, which are so high up that draughts would not be apprehended from their being a little opened. The Sister of Charity is the soldier of the hospital. She is good, courageous, and devoted. But she is so broken to passive obedience, that in new situations she has no intelligent initiative. A Florence Nightingale is badly wanted to supervise the French ambulances, and Gambetta should try to discover one either in England or America.

Bordeaux, Dec. 15.—This is a grand metropolitan city, and I feel an immense relief at being translated from dull, prosaic,

unintellectual Tours to this great centre of French civilization.

I may, perhaps, be laughed at for my faith, but I cling to the belief that France is invincible ; and even if Paris should fall—and I do not expect such a catastrophe—Bordeaux might still be the capital of a great nation. What may be called the “west-end” of this city is the central part around the splendid theatre—the finest in France. All the best streets converge upon the magnificent *place* on which this theatre stands. This quarter, well paved and well drained, considerably above the level of the river, is altogether charming. In the midst of an immense population you enjoy the fresh breeze of the Garonne, and have all the advantages of the country. In the best parts of Bordeaux there is really a *rus in urbe*. As a winter residence I should infinitely prefer Bordeaux to Paris. In summer it would also be better for those who do not mind mosquitoes, which I do, and of whom I have a terrible recollection when they paid their attentions to me at Bordeaux many years ago. Since I have been here it has rained almost continually, and the streets show a very good imitation of London mud. They say it rains in Bordeaux more than in most parts of France. But the breeze from the Garonne is very refreshing. The quays—especially those parts below bridge, where the eye is delighted by splendid shipping—are charming. I have found out there a restaurant looking upon the Garonne and the hills beyond, where one may get a good repast in quiet—such as is not to be had in the frequented parts of the town. The Café de Bordeaux, opposite the theatre, keeps a good cook, but has an administration which spoils the Egyptians. Habitually they put on several francs more than is due upon every bill, trusting to ignorance and shamefacedness that no objection will be taken. The last time I dined there they charged me five francs for a duck’s liver. As the average price for a fat duck is but three francs, I kicked against this extortion, and shall not patronize that café again. The “bourgeoisie” have gone clean crazy in the expectation of making enormous profits out of the sudden crowds of visitors. But, as in reality the town is large enough to accommodate far greater numbers than those who have to come in the wake of the Government, the prices of lodgings are rapidly coming down, and people who asked a year’s rent for a month are now putting out placards without finding customers. I never saw anywhere such good hackney carriages as there are here. They are as big as the Lord Mayor’s state coach, and drawn by lithesome Languedoc horses, which go twice as fast as any cattle you ever see in Paris. The fare is only two

frances the hour, and the drivers are particularly civil. It is a pleasure to ask a question in any shop, so intelligent and so civil is the answer which you always get. There are outlying parts of Bordeaux which I have not yet thoroughly investigated, but which, from the specimens I have seen, look mean and dirty, like the worst parts of the borough of Southwark. But the centre of the town is magnificent. The Jardin Public, a great improvement upon the Parc Monceaux, is surrounded by handsome houses, much in the style of those of the Regent's Park, but more solid. On the Place des Quinconces I see every day at drill large bodies of exceedingly smart National Guards. The market is delightful to see. Every variety of vegetable is there in the highest perfection. Fish, flowers, and fruit are all to be found in sections radiating from a central point, without loss of time in seeking. The cafés, without being so splendidly ornamented as those of Marseilles, are large, comfortable, and supply good things.

The papers here are immensely indignant at the Dutch Government having given up four French officers to Prussia, who were forthwith shot. I see nothing astonishing in this conduct on the part of a sovereign who employed Madame Musard to treat for the sale of Luxemburg to France.

Wholesome examples have been made of two Imperial generals. Brigadier-General Morandy, commanding the 1st Brigade of the 3rd Division of the 16th Corps d'Armée, is dismissed for "manifest incapacity in the field." General of Division Sol, commanding the 18th Division, is dismissed for having "too precipitately evacuated Tours." This General Sol is the son-in-law of M. Gouin, the ex-senator and great Tours banker. That, out of fear of exposing his father-in-law's property, he did evacuate Tours too precipitately is proved by the fact that the enemy has never got farther towards Tours than Montrichard, and is now even farther back.

I rather think some of M. Gambetta's friends must have suggested that the soldiers, who had been accustomed to reverence the big epaulettes, cocked hats, and profuse embroidery of the Empire, would not easily believe him to be a personage of importance in the almost more than plain civilian dress which he has been in the habit of wearing, he having other things to think of than his toilette. I observed, while on his way here from Tours, at Poitiers, as he walked along the platform to his special train for Bourges, and returned the salutes of the crowd, that he had put on a handsome black surtout, turned down with Russian sable, and that he wore boots up to the knee, which, but for the want of the mere-

tricious tassel, might be called Hessian. In this attire, on horseback, and followed by a couple of generals as aides-de-camp, he may cut a very respectable figure in reviewing an army, without incurring the ridicule of affecting to be a military man. It will be quite enough for the common eye in the ranks if he is not dressed exactly like any banker's clerk, and so far I think a slight theatrical display justifiable and expedient.

Whilst the Bordeaux Government was settling itself in its new-found home, General Chanzy was admirably justifying his title to the most important military command which M. Gambetta had to confer. We have seen how he was cut off from Orleans on the 2nd and 3rd of December, with his own 16th Corps and the 17th. These, reinforced in the following week by the 21st Corps, which was sent to him either from Tours or Blois, constituted the new active Army of the Loire, with which he was to endeavour to fulfil the hopes which General d'Aurelle had failed to realize. M. Gambetta had pledged himself to support the new commander with all the forces of the west. But these forces existed as yet only in a rudimentary condition, and weeks must elapse before they could be drawn upon with any certainty. In the meanwhile it was most important to present the best possible face to the enemy.

The 16th Corps, after the defeats of the 3rd and 4th of December, had retreated down the river as far as Mer, within fourteen miles of Blois. General Chanzy ordered its columns to re-form at Beaugency, seven miles nearer to Orleans. On the 7th, two days after the occupation of Orleans, Prince Frederick Charles sent the Duke of Mecklenburg down the right bank of the river, with only the 17th Division, and the remnant of Von der Tann's Bavarians, apparently not expecting that he would encounter any serious opposition. It did not seem probable that the advance upon Tours would be impeded by only a portion of that French army which, as a whole, had already been beaten and dispersed. But as the leading columns of the Mecklenburgers were filing from the village of Meung, on the morning of the 7th, to debouch upon the plain, on the side towards Beaugency, they were received with a hot artillery and rifle fire, which compelled them to fall back and seek shelter until their artillery could come up, when the Mecklenburgers advanced, and the battle became general. It soon appeared that the French were in superior force, and some of the German regiments suffered severely, until the Bavarians came up from the rear late in the afternoon, when the French were driven over the undulating plain as far as Beaugency. There Chanzy

received reinforcements, and commenced an animated attack. The Duke's army was at the same time strengthened by the arrival of the 22nd Division. On the morning of the 8th, the French were posted on a ridge, on which stands the village of Tavers, below Beaugency. The French attacked, between eight and nine in the morning, the battle raging round the village of Messas and extending as far as Cravant, without any decisive result, and by evening, although some ground had been gained, and Cravant and Messas had been taken, an unpleasant sense of disappointment was general in the German camp. It was resolved that something should be done to augment the acquisitions of the day, and in the night two Hanseatic regiments were sent to secure the village of Vernon, which they took, capturing 400 prisoners; the Bavarians being successful in a similar enterprise at La Mée.

On the 9th the cannonading began again at daybreak, and it was seen that the German position had improved, the Grand Duke's army occupying the ground on which the French had stood on the day before. The village of Villorceau was taken by the Germans early in the day, and they continued to gain ground until the afternoon, when it was seen that General Chanzy was concentrating strongly on the German right; he was in reality falling back upon the Forest of Marchenoir. In the course of the day the Grand Duke had been strengthened by the arrival of the 10th Corps from Orleans. To be obliged to send for reinforcements was an unusual experience for the Germans, and they wondered at the pertinacity of their enemy. On the morning of the 10th the French again attacked the 22nd, which was holding Cernay and Cravant, and by noon the whole line was engaged, but the operations on both sides were characterized by caution. At the close of the day the French had drawn in their wings, and were concentrated between Villermain and Josnes, with the Forest of Marchenoir in their rear. On the 11th the two armies stood inactive, merely observing one another, but on the 12th, the French had mysteriously disappeared, and the Grand Duke's army set out, marching by cross-roads towards the enemy. Chanzy had dodged his pursuers: while they were thinking of driving him upon Tours, he had moved to take up a position stronger than that which he had abandoned, on the direct road to Paris, and where he could receive reinforcements from the west. The French had reached Freteval, not without great difficulty and severe losses in rear-guard actions; moreover, the state of the roads, strewn with knapsacks and Chassepôts, told that at length some at least of their troops were becoming demoralized.

About midway between Châteaudun and Vendôme the Loir traverses a range of hills, in one of the valleys of which lies the town of Fréteval, on the left bank of the river. The great Forest of Marchenoir extends from the river near Fréteval almost to Beaugency; and another forest, that of Fréteval, extends from the right bank eastward. The French had taken up a position on a spur of the range, on the right bank of the river, with the wood of Fréteval behind them and on their left, the wood of Marchenoir on the right, and the River Loir, which there makes a bend, in their front. They had planted batteries wherever any advantage of ground was to be had, and filled the wooded slopes with sharpshooters. The village of Fréteval was taken at the point of the bayonet in the fighting on the 14th, but could not be held on account of its exposed position. On the morning of the 15th the state of affairs looked unpleasant for the Germans. They had been sent to drive the Army of the Loire farther away from Paris; and now that army, by a skilful movement, had not only placed itself on the road to Paris, but had got the start of them, leaving them in its rear. No German army was any longer between that of General Chanzy and the one which was investing the capital, and only an inferior force was behind. As Chanzy was in communication with Le Mans and the west, he might at any time become strong enough to advance boldly upon Paris by Châteaudun, and indeed it was by no means certain that he was not already doing so. The position of the French at Fréteval was too strong to be stormed with the force at the Grand Duke's disposal; but, fortunately for him, a direct attack became unnecessary.

Prince Frederick Charles had sent the 9th Corps down the Loire—the distinction between this river and the Loir will be borne in mind—which had appeared in the rear of Blois, on the east bank of the river, on the 12th; but as the bridge was broken, the corps could not enter Blois until the 10th Corps, marching to that city, held out a hand to it, when the 9th passed over on an extemporized bridge of boats. The 10th Corps was next sent to Vendôme, and its success there compelled the French to abandon their strong position at Fréteval, higher up the river. The French were posted in front of Vendôme, which they held on the 14th and 15th, but they were beaten in an artillery duel, and evacuated the town on the evening of the latter day, the Germans entering it on the 16th. The German line was now formed, the Duke of Mecklenburg occupying Cloyes and Morée, the 10th Corps being at Vendôme, and the 9th at Blois. On the 17th Chanzy had another rear-guard affair with Von der Tann at Epuisay, where the roads

from Vendôme and Morée to Saint-Calais unite, and then withdrew to Le Mans, which he entered on the 21st. He had been fighting throughout a losing battle, but he held that anything was better than the continued retreats by which the soldiers had been disheartened. The tenacity of the French in these incessant engagements had astonished their adversaries, but it seems to have been chiefly the tenacity of the new generals. The qualities of the various corps of the French army are so diverse that no general statement on the subject can be warranted: while some of the troops fought with a patriotic courage, others surrendered themselves prisoners with the most shameless levity, even seeking out the Uhlans to be conducted to head-quarters.

On the 20th General Voigts-Rhetz, commanding the 10th Corps, defeated a body of French near Monnaie, and drove them beyond Notre Dame d'Oé, a few miles nearer Tours. On the following morning the Germans took possession of the heights commanding the stone bridge of Tours. A patrol of cuirassiers came upon the bridge, and shots were fired upon them by groups of civilians, when three or four of the Germans were killed or wounded. The patrol retired at full gallop. Immediately afterwards a cannonade was opened upon the town, and the shells, falling in the streets, killed several persons. A flag of truce having been hoisted, the Mayor proceeded to the enemy, and at his request the cannonade was stopped. The Germans did not, however, enter the town on that occasion.

General Chanzy was leading his troops with great skill, but it is doubtful whether the Parisians would have accepted his eccentric retreat, and his subsequent enforced inactivity, as a fulfilment of M. Gambetta's promises. But the comparative ignorance in which Paris was kept of the state of the provinces was one of the conditions of the prolongation of war. The pigeon, we have seen, was only an uncertain conveyer of news to the capital; but the privations of Paris were made known to the departments and to Europe with great frequency by balloons.

The first balloon sent by the Paris post-office left on the 23rd of September. Between that date and the end of November 30 balloons were sent from Paris, each with, on an average, two passengers, 200 to 300 kilogrammes of letters, and a couple of pigeons. The greatest distance travelled by these balloons, except the one which fell in Norway, was about 200 kilometres. By December it was not known what had become of half of the balloons which had been sent. They were usually made of strong calico, covered with two or three coatings of a varnish composed of linseed oil and a little oxide of lead; they were filled with the gas used for lighting the streets, and when full occupied a space of about 2,000 cubic mètres. The balloons were

made at the Northern and the Orleans railway stations. At the former white calico alone was used—and the balloons were sewn together by machinery; at the latter they were sewn by hand, and the material used was coloured calico; the postage (20 centimes per four grammes) amply covered the expense of the despatch.

The farthest distance attained was traversed by one which fell at None, in Norway. The aeronauts went up from Paris in the balloon at 11.45 p.m. on the 24th of November, with the intention of going south towards Tours. They passed the Prussian lines at a height of 800 mètres, but kept still rising in order to get into a different current of air. After the lapse of some time, having again descended, they heard a noise as of many locomotives, but soon found out, to their utter dismay, that they were drifting over the ocean. They saw several ships, and endeavoured, by letting out a long rope touching the sea, to check the speed of the balloon, and also hoping, possibly, to get help from some vessel if they in their sight let themselves into the sea; but they soon found this attempt to be fruitless, and they had to cut the line and rise again. They now let out a pigeon with a message of their distress, but with no hope of being saved. About twelve o'clock they seemed to perceive some fixed outlines looking like land covered with snow, but were not certain, and it soon vanished in the fog and clouds. Fancying again they heard the sea, they pulled open one of the mail bags and threw out some newspapers in order to rise higher up; but a couple of hours after (or about three in the afternoon) they felt as if something touched the car of the balloon, and on looking out they found themselves moving over and skirting the trees. At once they made up their minds to try to escape, and, coming within a few mètres of the ground, they let themselves out, and owing to the deep snow they were not much injured.

The travellers, exhausted both in body and mind, remained during the night where they had descended, the temperature being 20 deg. Fahrenheit. Next morning, after light broke, they commenced roaming about in the snow, not knowing in the least where they were, but supposed it to be Iceland. At length they found a dilapidated house, in which they kindled a fire, which attracted the attention of some people felling timber in the forest, who took them home and cared for them as well as they could; nevertheless, the travellers not knowing the least of the language, they remained utterly at a loss as to where they were. At last one of the men produced a match-box, on which "Christiania" was printed, and this told them they were in Norway. By gesticulations they explained who

they were, how they had come, and where they would go to, and soon the clergyman and one or two others who could speak French came to help, and, after seeing them properly clothed and provided for, sent them on in sledges, first to Konysberg and then to Drammen, where the occurrence was already known. The place where the Frenchmen alighted was Lidfjeld, a mountain about five Norwegian miles south-west of Konysberg (on the map marked "Seljord"). The distance from Paris to this place is about 840 English miles, and the time of the journey from a quarter to twelve on Thursday evening to three next afternoon ($15\frac{1}{4}$ hours). The aeronauts were M. Rolier, Captain in the Artillery, and M. Dechamps, and were the bearers of despatches from General Trochu to M. Gambetta.

The Bordeaux Correspondent, under date December 15th, wrote concerning M. Gambetta's voyage through the air :—

I was yesterday in the company of two gentlemen who have made the most remarkable of the balloon voyages accomplished since the investment of Paris. I mean Mr. May, the American, who left the French capital simultaneously with M. Gambetta, though in another balloon, and M. Martin, who descended at Belle-Isle, in the "Jules Favre," on the 1st of December. Their impressions wholly differed from those of M. Gambetta, who has described to me the experiences of his aerial sail from Paris to Montdidier. The American gentleman intensely enjoyed the "easy locomotion" of the balloon. "Nothing could," he said, "be more beautiful. There you went, ever so much faster than an express train, without a single jolt, or the least sense of friction. The wind was not in your face, and you hardly felt it at your back. There was no noise, no dust, no racket, but the most lovely gliding motion. Apart from the Prussian bullets that whistled unpleasantly round the cars of the balloonists, the single drawback was the faint smell of gas, which throughout the journey betrayed the bad quality of the varnish used by Nadar in the manufacture of his cotton balloons." The descent Mr. May speaks of as "just nothing" at all. "The car of the balloon touched the ground as deftly as a humming bird, hopped as lightly fifteen yards into the air, and was then easily brought to earth by some peasants, to whom ropes had been thrown out." One of the phenomena which balloon travelling presented to the American gentleman was the great distance at which, in the upper regions, articulate sounds are distinctly audible. Messrs. May and Reynolds conversed over Creil at an incredible distance with MM.

Spuller and Gambetta. They could understand what the Germans shouted to each other, though more than a couple of thousand yards above them. The tonic effect of a high altitude was not lessened by the volleys of musketry directed at the transatlantic *voyageurs*, who lunched in their balloon, and threw various tit-bits to the soldiers beneath, to prove to them that Paris could yet indulge in the delicacies of the table. Gambetta's impressions were entirely different. He was almost, to use his own language, "stunned with the overpowering idea of Nature's force and man's weakness. He felt, to his great astonishment, that he had no sense of the abyss." The world seemed to recede from the balloon. Instead of being dazzled with the vast horizon which was opened to his gaze, he was "stupefied at the total obliteration of the picturesque in the boundless expanse beneath him. The earth had to him the appearance of a badly designed carpet, or rather a carpet in which the different coloured wools had been woven entirely by chance. Light and vastness were deprived of the value which shade and proportion give them." Nature seen from a balloon was in M. Gambetta's estimation *une vilaine Chinoiserie*, and the art-loving child of the South thanked Heaven when he touched earth again, "and got into a sphere where man has a *point de résistance* in struggling against the tyranny of Creation." M. Spuller, M. Gambetta's companion, who, I presume, is of German origin, as he is of German appearance, was otherwise affected. He enjoyed the sensation of being carried along as helplessly as if he were a log of wood floating down a river. The Pantheistic leanings of the Teuton came out in him. He was glad, as the Hindoos put it, to be lost in the Great Whole. In M. Gambetta there was manifested that tendency of the Gallo-Latin family to react against Nature, which is at the bottom of every truly artistic organization. The American studied "ballooning" as compared with steam locomotion. He had suffered from the inconveniences of travelling across continents in "railway cars," and his attention was turned from the picturesque side of the question to the practical. M. Martin, who is a weather-beaten naval officer, speaks with almost superstitious awe of the small hours of a very cold December morning. The "Jules Favre" rose at once above the snow clouds which obscured the sky, into a stratum of bitter cold air, along which it was driven with giddy speed in a westerly direction. M. Martin says he felt like a man who had been buried alive in a wide and chilling vault, and was beyond the reach of human sympathy or aid. Blackness was beneath him. The stars above did not look friendly;

and, presently, some snow clouds obscured the constellations by which sailors guide themselves across the ocean. The instruments of the aerostats had got out of order, in consequence of which neither M. Martin nor his companion could tell the point of the compass on which they were running. At four o'clock they perceived a sheet of water. Taking it for the Loire, they allowed the balloon to scud along. But presently they discerned a light-house, and some ships with lanterns to the fore. Martin, who is from the department of Finistère, took his bearings in a moment; and, with the promptitude of a sailor, set about effecting an instantaneous descent over Belle-Isle. A couple of thousand yards more, and he and his companions would have been lost, for they had got almost to the western side of the island. He climbed up in the ropes, and pulled open the escape valve, the pulley of which had been blown out of his reach by the hurricane in which they travelled. The descent was so rapid that M. Martin and his friend lost consciousness while falling. Their balloon bounded like a wounded monster, tearing off the roof of a house, breaking down a wall, and dashing madly against an ancient church, where the gas was crushed out of its cotton envelope. When M. Martin recovered his senses he found that some coastguards had rushed to his assistance, and were holding down the car, from which the other aerostat had been thrown in one of the mad bounds of the balloon. On proceeding to search for him, they discovered him bathed in blood, and in a state of insensibility. The doctor of the island was speedily fetched, and was accompanied by M. Armand Trochu, the General's brother. M. Armand Trochu has a little property in Belle-Isle, where he lives with his mother, who is in her eighty-fourth year, and a native of the island. It was, curiously enough, the roof of M. Armand Trochu's house which was torn down by the "Jules Favre." The old lady, in point of religious feelings, belongs to La Brétagne Bretonnante. She affirms that she had been throughout the night praying for a sign from heaven that France is to be saved by the instrumentality of her son, and that when the rafters crashed over her head she called out to her granddaughter, "*La Providence du Roi de Prusse ne va pas gagner la partie; en voilà la preuve.*" As this anecdote comes from M. Martin, it should not be classed among the fictions of 1870.

By the middle of December, the Baden Corps, which had for some time occupied Dijon, became unpleasantly aware of a concentration of the enemy in its front, and General Werder, its commander, determined to ascertain the strength of the enemy. Accordingly, on the 18th of December, the 1st and

2nd Baden Brigades, under General Glumer and Prince William of Baden, attacked Nuits, which was taken in the evening, after five hours' fighting, 600 prisoners being captured. Prince William and General Glumer were both wounded. The position thus won was not held by the Germans, who very soon abandoned Dijon. On the 30th of December, the Correspondent with General Garibaldi wrote from Macon :—

The evacuation of Dijon by the Germans is by no means surprising, firstly, because some days previous to the evacuation a large portion of the troops who occupied the town were sent northwards; and, secondly, on account of the vast number of trains, carrying troops, artillery, and military stores, which the French have been sending during the past week in the direction of Beaune. In fact, since last Thursday week, railway communication between Lyons and Beaune has been entirely interrupted for the public, the Minister of War having placed the line in requisition. So Dijon has been evacuated by the Germans and occupied by our troops, and yet nothing has been gained by the movement, unless it is the railway to Paris. When Dijon was worth taking—that is to say, when there was artillery and ammunition there—the Government allowed a few thousand Garibaldians and Mobiles to attack the place with three batteries of 8-pounders, while the cannon used by the enemy were equal to 24-pounders. Now that the Germans have had time to ruin the town, to remove their artillery and ammunition, and, finally, to execute a retreat in perfect order, an imposing army is brought against them, which, instead of being sent in pursuit, appears to be reposing on its easily-gained laurels. To give you an idea of the number of cannon which have been sent from Lyons in the direction of Beaune, I will mention that the military authorities have placed all the omnibus horses in Lyons in requisition for the artillery, besides almost all the cart horses in the surrounding neighbourhood. What a pity it is that a portion of this artillery was not sent to General Crémier previous to the fight at Nuits! It is not surprising, with the system which is followed by M. Gambetta and his colleagues, that the French are beaten in every direction. They allow the Germans to penetrate into the very heart of France without making any serious resistance; they allow them to occupy strong positions; and then, when they have had time to repose and to collect their forces, an army very inferior in number, with hardly any artillery, is sent to attack them, and, as a matter of course, is cut to pieces.

Such complete confusion reigns all along the line, from Lyons to Beaune, that I hardly know when I shall be able to get on to Dijon unless I post, which is by no means an agreeable mode of travelling when the roads are two feet deep in snow, as at the present moment. I mentioned above that there were no passenger trains from Lyons to Beaune. A certain number of military trains pass along the line during the day, but these have no fixed hour either for arrival or departure, so that it is necessary for a person who really wishes to get off to remain at the railway station until a train passes. I am told that between here and Beaune the railway stations are positively encumbered with artillery and ammunition waggons. It is therefore evident that, during the past week, an immense number of troops have been sent towards Beaune. The Germans who were at Dijon have retired, it is said, to Gray. Two days have expired since they evacuated Dijon, but we have no news of a battle having taken place in the neighbourhood of Gray. Surely the French generals will pursue them, and yet the fact of the railway stations being encumbered with artillery seems to indicate that no advance is being made.

The weather here is bitterly cold, there are two feet of snow in the streets, and immense blocks of ice, four or five inches thick, are floating down the Saône. I think I told you, in a previous correspondence, that Frapoli, our ex-chief of the general staff, had been made general of division by the Minister of War, with power to form an army of 60,000 men: up to the present, I believe that he has got together about sixty; but the amusing thing is, that on the first floor of the very hotel where the General has established his headquarters is the recruiting office for the Garibaldian volunteers. On the floor above is that of the General. A telegram from Dijon, made public by the Prefect of Macon, as I write, says that the Germans have evacuated Gray, and have withdrawn to Vesoul.

A lieutenant of the 25th Rhenish Infantry wrote from Pesmes on the march:—

The 1st and 2nd battalion of our regiment had been for the last few days in and around Gray, resting after their numerous fatigues. At the urgent solicitation of the commander of our regiment, our battalion at last obtained the longed-for permission to rest and recruit itself; when already on the march towards Gray, we received counter orders to scour the country in all directions. This guerilla warfare is an unpleasant kind of fighting, ever seeking after an invisible

foe, who suddenly, when one least expects it, darts out of his woods in order to disappear the next moment with equal celerity; added to this, the fatiguing marches, the bad food, which is a necessary consequence of our rapid advance over paths which are absolutely impracticable for our proviant-column, try to the utmost the endurance of our men. When one at last has brought the foe to a standstill, and compelled him to show fight, should the struggle take an unfavourable turn for him, he mostly succeeds in effecting a withdrawal upon his ever-present line of retreat. The laurels which we hope to gain after our fatigues and privations vanish into thin air, and the game has to be commenced all over again. Scarcely has the soldier gained his quarters, and has begun by anticipation to rejoice over his much-needed rest, than the alarm is sounded—the bushrangers have attacked the foreposts, but should they perceive the numerical superiority is not on their side, they retreat to their fastnesses as quickly as they came. As we marched on Besançon, we heard that our 1st battalion, in the neighbourhood of Gray, had had a successful engagement, and that the detachment of Uhlans attached to our regiment had made a brilliant attack on the enemy's infantry: our regiment had several wounded; the Uhlans especially suffered. On the afternoon of this day, a rain of bullets poured upon us from an ambush in a wood we had to pass; we were obliged to attack the position, as it completely commanded the road along which we had to advance. The Franks-tireurs here appeared to be better commanded than usual, for they defended themselves obstinately, and chose their positions with great circumspection. Low brushwood skirted the entrance to the wood; soon, however, we found ourselves under lofty trees. I had advanced, among the first in the chain of tirailleurs, when the fight, as soon as we passed the outskirts of the wood, broke up into hand-to-hand encounters. Our men behaved admirably, and aimed wherever they could discern an exposed spot in the covered positions of the enemy. When we had advanced about fifty paces under the high trees, the enemy, concealed by their denser growth, directed a furious and obstinate fire on us. I ordered several of my men to advance in wide curves, whilst we in the front continued our fire. Soon the enemy drew back, leaving skirmishers to cover his retreat. One young fellow attracted our notice particularly. Springing from tree to tree, and continually firing, he had already done us much harm, when an under-officer, renowned as a good shot, who had already aimed at him several times without effect, said, "Herr

Lieutenant, I shall yet stop the jumping of that French harlequin." At the next shot our adversary rolled in the snow. I was quickly at his side. He was a handsome youth, with the first down on his upper lip; his white hands did not appear to have ever done an hour's hard work. The ball had penetrated his breast, and the blood gushed in streams from the wound. As we considered the fight at an end, and had completed our task, I remained at his side, and sought to raise the groaning form. He could speak no more; suddenly he seized me convulsively by the hand; his limbs quivered—his whole form seemed to stretch itself out—his eyes appeared about to burst from their sockets—a deep groan—and he was no more. Slowly I let his body glide down on the snow. It was a weird and ghastly scene: the pale countenance of the young man took a gentle expression in death; around him were the grave faces of our soldiers, who in solemn silence leant upon their weapons. Through the high trees came a glimmering light: they stretched their mighty branches over us, as if they would conceal with their protecting arms man's cruel deeds from the eyes of the unseen God. In his breast-pocket we found several letters from his old mother, and the portrait of a young lady—probably his sweetheart. His address was in his pocket-book. I took possession of the different articles, cut off a lock of his hair, and sent the things as soon as I possibly could to his mother, a lady of position in Lyons. She, poor soul, perhaps little foreboded that her son lay cold and stiff under the tall trees, and that no hand was raised to prepare him a last resting-place. Such, however, is war—a fearful word of terrible meaning, whose actual signification only soldiers understand. In many places the white snow was soaked in human blood, and the glittering hoar frost on the bushes was sprinkled with the purple rain. We returned to our column. Our advance was not further disputed. Slowly we dragged ourselves on through the deep snow, and tried to enliven ourselves as best we could on the way. We are so accustomed to marching, that if one took the legs only of a *Funfundzwanziger* and placed them in an upright position, they would march of their own accord. We have still, however, a good piece of work before us, for the enemy's forces increase from day to day. A large force is advancing from the south—probably with the intention of trying to regain the lost passes of the Vosges, and attacking our armies in the rear. In order to worthily fulfil the task which yet remains to us, we require more than anything else proper clothing in this severe weather, and food more proportionate to the immense fatigues

we have to undergo. Most of our men, as I before said, have to endure the greatest privation; they have actually no shoes to their feet, some have to run barefoot, and that in the deep snow, and continual mounting guard is no joke. Although fresh supplies of clothing have long been ordered, they have never reached us. Who is to blame for this I know not.

We shall before long have to revert to the German movement of which the evacuation of Dijon was the commencement, but in the meantime must notice one of the consequences of the attack on Nuits—an assassination at Lyons, which for a while gave great concern to the Bordeaux Government. The Correspondent with Garibaldi's army visited Lyons on the occasion of this tragic event, and thus wrote from that city on the 21st of December:—

I have said that in the battle in the neighbourhood of Nuits, the 1st and 2nd Legions of the department of the Rhône were terribly knocked about. This was too much for the advanced party at Lyons. They had witnessed with comparative indifference the capitulation of Sedan, the bombardment of Strasburg, the fall of the different small fortified towns, the capitulation of Metz, the sorties from Paris, the defeat of Garibaldi under Dijon, the defeat of the Army of the Loire, but here was something that came home to them. In the affair at Nuits the blood of Lyons had been spilt; “eye for eye, tooth for tooth!” blood must be spilt in revenge. Such is the reasoning of the Reds. In default of a Prussian a Frenchman would do: they are not long in finding victims. The Commander of the 12th Battalion of the National Guards happened to be passing along the Boulevard of the Croix-Rousse. Instantly he is surrounded, and ordered to have the *rappel* beaten, and march with his troops upon the hotel. For the mob, in their fury, intended stringing up all the functionaries in Lyons from the Prefect to the Mayor. The commander, by name Arnaud, refuses, upon which the crowd menace him with death, and several of the men, who were armed, quietly load their guns; women, who were there in considerable numbers, rush upon him, slap and scratch his face, and pull his beard. Commander Arnaud draws his revolver, and fires three shots—some say in the air, others on the people—in any case no one was either killed or wounded. The furious crowd, maddened by resistance, and eager to dip their fingers in blood, fall upon the unfortunate commander, drag him into a low wine-shop, go through the farce of a sham trial, and condemn him to death. He is

then dragged to a piece of waste ground a few yards distant, and his executioners present themselves. Arnaud now understands that he has already one foot in the grave, but his courage does not forsake him; he takes off his kepi, and shouts, "Vive la République!" His persecutors then begin to open their eyes to the atrocity of the crime they are about to commit, and a few cries for pardon are raised, but it is too late. Three or four of the assassins discharge their guns, and their victim falls wounded, but not dead. A youth of sixteen then rushes forward with a revolver, intending to blow out his brains; but although Arnaud is wounded in several places, the instinct of life is still strong, and he manages to thrust back the arm which is to put an end to his existence. Three men then point their guns close to his head, pull the triggers, and all is over. The body is picked up and taken to the Mairie, and the assassins then send to inform the murdered man's wife of what has occurred. These events took place in the morning, and in the afternoon of the same day the assassins proceeded to the square of the Hôtel de Ville, accompanied by a large number of women carrying red flags. They found the square held by the National Guard, with loaded guns. Several deputations, which I believe were arrested as soon as they entered the Hôtel de Ville, were allowed to pass, and a considerable number of red flags were taken away from the women, who formed the principal feature of the demonstration. I have often noticed that cold water is the best thing for dispersing French mobs. On the present occasion it happened to rain hard all the afternoon, so that the loiterers in the bye-streets, after getting wet through, had no alternative but to return home. About twenty-five people have been arrested, and are to be tried by court-martial.

Yesterday I followed the funeral of Commander Arnaud. We passed through the quarter where he was surrounded by the mob, and close to the very spot where he was shot. M. Gambetta, who arrived in Lyons early in the morning, followed the procession, which promenaded the streets of Lyons during four hours. There were, I should think, over three hundred officers present.

A day or two ago I went to the Sous-Préfecture at Autun—where the head-quarters of General Garibaldi are established—to obtain from Colonel Canzio an introduction to the Sub-Prefect of Châlons-sur-Saône, where I was going to purchase a few articles of clothing which it was absolutely impossible to obtain on the spot. I must tell you that in Autun most things, and especially winter clothes, become

scarcer and scarcer every day, from the fact that the tradesmen put such little faith in the French armies, and are so dreadfully afraid of being plundered by the Germans in the event of the former having to retreat, that they will not renew their stock in proportion as it diminishes. In the saloon of the Préfecture on the present occasion were several of the Staff officers. "Are you going to Châlons, Captain?" said one; and on my answering in the affirmative, he continued, "Bring us back some Parmesan cheese;" "And a pair of spurs for me," said another; "And some military braid," added a fourth; "And some grey cloth, some cigars, some red flannel, some flannel shirts, some novels, a bridle, &c.," chimed in the others. With several pages of my note-book filled with commissions of this nature, I hastened off to the railway station and started for Châlons-sur-Saône, in a train filled for the most part with sick soldiers, among whom there were, I am sorry to say, a large proportion of shamblers. I happened to perform a portion of the journey with two engineers from Le Creuzot, and was thus able to ascertain the exact state of the cannon foundry which has been cried up with such gross exaggeration by certain French newspapers. It appears that all the preparations for founding the cannons and mitrailleuses are now complete, and that the foundry is able to turn out three mitrailleuses a week, as well as a considerable number of cannons. Thirty batteries of small pieces which have been ordered by the Government at Bordeaux are almost ready, but up to the present time nothing has actually been delivered.

At Châlons-sur-Saône, a town of about 20,000 inhabitants, I made the acquaintance of the Citoyen Cotti, the Sub-Prefect. Cotti belongs to a Corsican family, the different members of which have, I am told, since the time of the First Napoleon, been the most bitter enemies of the Bonaparte family. At the age of seventeen the present Sub-Prefect was one of the victims of the *coup d'état*. There is nothing remarkable about Châlons-sur-Saône, with the exception, perhaps, that even in ordinary times it is one of the dullest and most uninteresting towns in France. At the present time it has neither troops nor artillery, and it was only the day that I was there that the National Guard was armed. I was not long in discovering that the inhabitants possessed about the same amount of courage and confidence as those of Autun. At several large cloth warehouses which I visited in my search after grey cloth, I found that a large portion of the goods had been hidden away in the cellars and elsewhere, and only a few pieces left in the shop. At the

Hôtel des Trois Moineaux, where I passed the night, mattresses and bronze clocks were somewhat scarce. The beds were made up of the ordinary spring mattress, and only one woollen bed, instead of three or four, as is customary in France, showing that at Châlons the inhabitants possessed as little confidence in the armies sent by the Provisional Government to stop the German advance upon Lyons as elsewhere. I am, however, bound to say that the popularity of General Garibaldi was great. Everywhere that I went I heard the good and honest old General praised to the skies. "Had it not been for Garibaldi," they exclaimed, "we should have had the Prussians here before now."

At Châlons-sur-Saône I found neither Parmesan cheese, nor spurs, nor grey cloth, nor military braid, so I decided on going as far as Macon. Here I made the acquaintance of M. Frederick Morin, the Prefect, and saw some samples of a regiment of cavalry, called the Eclaireurs of Saône and Loire, which was being formed at Macon. The regiment looks very promising. It is well mounted, which is a very important matter. The uniform consists of a coarse blue flannel blouse faced with red, cord trousers and boots, a kepi, and a cloak with a hood. Each man is armed with a sabre, a Remington carbine (an excellent arm, which, in my opinion, is superior to the Chassepôt), and a revolver. One or two companies of the regiments are already with General Crémier, and were probably turned to account in the battle of Nuits. At Macon I found a population so enthusiastic in its praise of the Garibaldians that I and a captain of the General's staff, whom I met at the Hôtel de l'Europe, could hardly appear in the street without attracting a considerable crowd, who followed us about wherever we went, shouting, "Vivent les Garibaldiens!" "Vive Garibaldi!"

I had intended, on reaching Macon, to proceed to Chambéry, where I had heard that General Frapoli was forming an army; for the ex-Colonel Frapoli, being unable to come to an understanding with General Garibaldi, has been promoted to the grade of general by M. Gambetta, who is a Freemason, like Frapoli, and one of his intimate friends. I was told at Macon that Frapoli was at Lyons, so I decided on coming here, principally with a view of seeing what kind of army, or rather corps, Frapoli was getting together.

This is the second time that I have been in Lyons. My first visit was made only a few months ago, just before the declaration of the present war. On that occasion I formed one of a party of journalists who were invited by the Commission

of the Lyons Exhibition of 1871 to report on the progress of the works. I remember that, at Macon, a cold supper was spread in the buffet, and that the train was stopped for our convenience while we took our coffee, which must have been a most disagreeable thing for the other travellers; but in those days we were under Imperial sway, and the station-master was a most important individual. Since my last visit to Lyons nothing has changed, if I except the coloured head mounted upon what looks very much like a broomstick—probably an emblem of democracy—and which is placed upon the balcony of the Hôtel de Ville, surmounted by a blood-red flag. I was somewhat surprised to find the music-halls and theatres not only open to the public, but crowded. This struck me the more as one evening, at Autun, when Ricciotti Garibaldi, Colonel Canzio, and myself, together with several officers of the Staff, among whom was a tenor of the Milan Opera, went to a certain pastrycook's shop near the Place du Champ de Mars, with a view of playing a few patriotic songs, the proprietor of the establishment came upstairs in person to remind us that the country was bleeding, and that he could not think of allowing the piano to be touched.

I reached Lyons at 6 P.M., two hours behind time, and passed the evening at the Casino Music-hall. The entertainment consisted of the usual vulgar, and, I may say, immoral songs, which generally form the *répertoire* of establishments of this description, followed by the *Clodoche Cancon*, and a woman almost naked who danced a *Chahut à la Finette*. I had not been long in Lyons before I was surrounded by an anxious crowd hungry for news. "News?" I answered, in reply to the questions which greeted me on every side, "there is none. We have fortified Autun as well as we have been able, and with our three batteries of 8-pounders shall do what we can to resist the enemy."—"What?" said one, "have you not heard that Dijon has been occupied by the united forces of Crémér and Garibaldi?" I answered that I had not; that I had breakfasted with the Prefect of Dijon in the morning, and that he had received no news of that nature. It is now over two years since I have given up arguing with Frenchmen, so that the matter dropped. My Lyonnais friends had got it into their heads that a brilliant victory had been gained, and of course set me down as a straggler who had made off before the action. Later in the evening came the news of the evacuation of Nuits by General Crémér, followed by news of the general retreat, and the heavy losses sustained by the 1st and 2nd Legions of the department of the Rhône.

The following day the newspapers came out with reports of the battle of Nuits, but, like most French accounts of battles, it was difficult to understand anything save that the French troops had displayed the most prodigious valour, and had been beaten. I have since been able to get together the following account of what really occurred about 8 A.M. on Sunday morning: The French advanced posts, which had been removed to *Grandes-Baraques*, near Gevrey-Chambertin, situated exactly half-way between Nuits and Dijon, at a distance of eleven kilomètres from each town, were attacked by a Prussian column coming either from Dijon or from the entrenched camp at Marsannay. Up to 11 A.M. the French troops, who were commanded by General Crémér in person, held their positions, but at that hour a countryman came to tell them that another Prussian column was advancing rapidly along the road to Citeaux, threatening to cut them off unless they retired upon Nuits. They had hardly reached Nuits when they saw the column in question coming out of the woods of Gilly-les-Citeaux, and almost at the same time a third column appeared on the opposite side of the French positions. The third column was repulsed without difficulty, and the French attack was then directed, at about 2 P.M., upon the first and second Prussian columns, which were united. The battle commenced between Nuits and the village of Boncourt, which was subsequently burnt. During the retreat to Nuits, several of the French wounded fell into the hands of the enemy. Up to 3 P.M. the enemy's advance was stopped, but the French say that at that hour the Germans received reinforcements, and placing themselves on the offensive with renewed vigour, advanced as far as Nuits, and occupied several houses in the faubourgs. At 3.30 the 57th Regiment of the Line arrived upon the scene of action—too late, however, to be of any service. The French, nevertheless, tried a bayonet charge as a last effort, and on being repulsed with considerable loss, retired first of all to the heights, and then to Beaune. Some accounts say that General Crémér had with him 5,000 to 6,000 men; others, that he had 10,000. The Prussian forces are estimated at from 20,000 to 25,000 men, and eight batteries of artillery. The French newspapers, unable to give an estimate of the killed and wounded on their own side, affect, nevertheless, to be informed of the losses of the enemy, which they state as being 5,000 men, among whom they say is a Grand Duke of somewhere.

When I left Autun, there was a perfect understanding between General Crémér and Garibaldi. How was it that General

Garibaldi was not called upon to assist General Cr  mer?

Why is it that M. Gambetta—this advocate who has taken upon himself the responsibility of directing the military operations—leaves Garibaldi with only three batteries of 8-pounders, one of which is a small mountain battery drawn by mules? Why is it that our soldiers are without overcoats and shoes, and our paymaster without money? Probably, because M. Gambetta, who passed as a just and honest man during the Empire, intends continuing the system he adopted with regard to Garibaldi when the Government first accepted his services—namely, that of tying him hand and foot and telling him to walk, for fear that people should say afterwards, “Garibaldi saved France.”

CHAPTER XVI.

CHRISTMAS was approaching, and the crisis of the siege of Paris was still deferred. The longer the investment lasted the larger grew the total of the stores reputed to have been accumulated for the supply of the inhabitants. In September Paris was told that it could hold out two months. In December it was assured it had still left provisions for three. It was no secret that the German leaders were greatly disappointed, and that all the virtue of the most disciplined soldiery in the world was necessary to enable them to support the delay with resignation. In Germany some of the journals began to criticise the operations which for four months they had only admired. Count Moltke, it was said, was presuming upon fortune, instead of taking guarantees against its caprices, and must have failed to obtain accurate information as to the food supplies of Paris before he commenced the siege. Then, moreover, why had the French capital not been bombarded? It was no kindness to the Parisians to forbear the shelling of the city; whereas, since it was certain that Paris would yield as soon as it found that its life and property lay under the fire of the German artillery, a bombardment would cause lives to be spared which otherwise would perish by famine and disease. These questioners assumed, for the purpose of their argument, a difference of opinion between the King and his military advisers, and it was said at Berlin that the Prussian soldiers before Paris were being sacrificed to the humane susceptibilities of the King, who would not permit the bombardment of a city containing so many women and children. The truth was, that a miscalculation had been made at the German headquarters. It had been believed that the Parisians, shut in by

themselves, cut off from the provinces which they had been accustomed to lead, deprived of a thousand conveniences and enjoyments which had been regarded as parts of their very life, would become restless and ungovernable, and that, after a few riots, in which they would have made and remade half a dozen Governments, they would despatch a deputation to Versailles praying the King of Prussia to send a Grand Duke into the city with 100,000 men to maintain order. But the event proved far otherwise. Paris was never more easily governed than during the siege, although it was necessary to extend the administration of the executive to the very cellars and cupboards of the people; and the Germans at length found that, in order to take Paris, they must rely on themselves alone. The failure of Count Moltke's summons of December 5th—for a summons it really was—to induce General Trochu to treat for a capitulation or a peace, led to a reconsideration of the whole conduct of the siege, and from that time a great increase of energy was seen in the conveyance of heavy guns and siege ammunition to the lines before Paris. During the whole of December the German engineering staff was very actively employed, and by the middle of the month correspondents from before Paris employed themselves in fixing the day for the bombardment of the French capital.

In the meantime General Trochu and his colleagues had not been idle. The defeat of the Army of the Loire at a time when it seemed to be approaching Paris to raise the siege, had been felt as a grievous disappointment; but the Army of the North was assuming dimensions and, as was believed, an efficiency which would enable it to render important services to Paris. Even as early as the second week in December, it had left Lille under General Faidherbe, and had surprised a portion of a railway division with fifty infantry at Ham, and had caused them to sign articles of capitulation in regular form. Faidherbe had passed La Fère and St. Quentin in his march, and was believed to be descending upon the main line of the communications of the great besieging army, when suddenly he retraced his steps and advanced in the direction of Paris. In his despatch of December 14th, from Bourges, M. Gambetta had written:—

“In the north Faidherbe will have retaken La Fère, and found large stores of ammunition and provisions with guns. But we are very anxious about you. It is now more than a week since we received any news of you, whether from yourselves, from the Prussians, or from abroad. The cable with England is not acting. What is happening? Take advantage of this south-west wind to send a balloon which will fall in Belgium, and so put an end to our solicitude. The Prussian retreat is a

movement about which there can be no mistake. If we can only hold out—and we can if we have only the will—we shall beat them. They have already suffered enormous losses; and I learn from the most trustworthy sources that they experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining supplies of food. But to triumph we must resign ourselves to supreme sacrifices without murmuring, and fight even to the death.”

The patriotic confidence of M. Gambetta was betrayed by fortune. Faiderbe did not retake La Fère, and the Prussians were not retreating; but General Trochu determined to place himself in the best position, either to hold out a hand to Faiderbe if he should approach the German lines before Paris, or to detain the troops of the investing army, so that they might not be able to assist General Manteuffel against the French Army of the North. The Germans saw the preparations of the enemy two days before the French movement was actually made, as letters from before Paris, dated December 18th, showed; and as if this were not enough warning, a Paris balloon fell within their lines, containing an official despatch from General Trochu, stating that a great sortie would be made on the 20th. The sorties of November 28th and December 2nd had proved terrible failures; but the Parisian journals clamoured for their renewal. General Ducrot had said, on the former occasion, “this circle of iron, which has surrounded us now too long, threatens to stifle us in a slow agony;” and it threatened still.

The newspapers, recalling these words, argued: “We have here an army of 300,000 men, with a formidable artillery, and we do nothing. We neither try to pierce the lines, nor to raise the siege, nor even risk partial actions in order to kill as many Prussians as possible. We are losing time, we are eating up our stores, and we are not pushing on the work of deliverance. This inaction is deplorable. We shall always have more men than are wanted to defend positions which are never attacked. Why are cannon being made by thousands, and projectiles by hundreds of thousands, if they are not to be used? At the commencement of the month you destroyed 20,000 Prussians. What prevents you doing the same every week? It is of no use to disguise the fact, in the terrible position in which we and they find ourselves; it is only by killing, and killing again, that we shall be able to oblige them to loose their grip. The prospect is a horrible one, but the responsibility falls upon those who render it necessary. Let us make a bold effort, for there are moments when temerity is the highest wisdom, and when it is better to fail and perish than to perish ignobly and shamefully of hunger.”

On the 17th December General Trochu published the following address to the army:—

“Officers, Sub-officers, and Soldiers,—We have in common made efforts for our country which have served our sacred cause. Our brothers of the Army of the Loire, who have been inspired by the patriotism of the provinces, as the Army of Paris has been inspired by the patriotism of Paris, give us an admirable example. Like us, they ‘renew themselves’ under fire at the price of heroic sacrifices in a struggle which astonishes the enemy, troubled by the enormity of his losses and the indomitable energy of the resistance which he encounters. May these noble encouragements sustain you! May the grand spectacle of the citizens of Paris—soldiers like you, fighting with you in the close union of peril and danger—elevate you to the height of every duty and every danger! May your General infuse into your souls the hopes, the sentiments, and the firm resolutions with which his own is filled! “TROCHU.”

The active army of Paris at this time consisted of about 230,000 men. After the capitulation of Sedan, General Vinoy led about 28,000 men from Mézières to Paris; 40,000 old soldiers and men from the dépôts were got together, and to these were added 15,000 young recruits from the two last contingents, making in all about 83,000 men. The Paris Garde Mobile numbered 40,000 men, and those of the Garde Mobile of the provinces which were in Paris 90,000 more. The Navy furnished 10,000 men, and the Free Corps 20,000 more. This composite force of 243,000 men—Line, Mobile Guards, and Navy—had been diminished by about 12,000 men in the two sorties of November and December. A number of battalions of the Sedentary National Guard of Paris had already been constituted war battalions; but it was only at a later period of the siege that their military capabilities were severely tested.

The Correspondent at Versailles thus wrote on the 21st, when his colleague on the north-east side of Paris was very differently occupied:—

The shortest day of the year finds us, where the bright afternoons in September found us, waiting before Paris. Three months ago yesterday the great army of the Germans circled round the city, and all communication was cut off, and all supplies were stopped. I shall be slow to forget the exciting impression of that first arrival on the heights of Meudon, and that first glance over the white houses, and domes, and towers of Paris. It then seemed certain that the Parisians would yield so soon as they realized their peril. They might be

shelled. Was not that enough for them? Their daily newspapers would be deprived of news, their coffee would lose its flavour in the dulness of the time, and Paris would yield with tears of joy at being spared to fight some other day. Such were the prospects of September 20—when the Crown Prince rode up to the Préfecture on the Avenue de Paris. What are the prospects on December 21—when German uniforms have become as familiar to Versailles as the tall figures of the Life Guardsmen are to Knightsbridge? The answer is simple. Paris is more likely to hold out six weeks now than she seemed likely to hold out six days on September 20. The Parisians have risen to some extent to the measure of their destiny. We are in presence of a population which begins to feel proud of what it has achieved, and there will only be a surrender when such is absolutely necessary.

But we know so little of what happens in the beleaguered place, that I will speak rather of the progress of those who shut it in. Whilst only a faint echo of the resolution of the garrison reaches Versailles, there is here a full-toned shout of the stern desire of the Germans for glory and for revenge. They may be long delayed, but they are not going to let their prize slip through their fingers. If six weeks must be given to the task, six weeks shall be spent before Paris. If two months, or three months for that matter, the time can be spared. General Trochu must make up his mind to cut an opening in the German line, or must defend himself to the last in hopes of being helped from the Loire. By mere persistence in holding out, he will never drive away these firm obstinate besiegers. They did not attack him at first because they thought the works of Paris too strong to be easily silenced, and therefore chose the more cautious line of a well-armed blockade, of circumvallation, one might almost say, in old-world fashion. But they always could have tried their guns against Paris, and perhaps they will do so yet. I think the cry in Germany to bombard somewhat unreasonable. Surely the generals whose fame depends on success are doing their best to win. We should remember, however, that some confusion exists as to what "bombardment" means. The Germans who call for vigour, and the English public which deprecates severe measures, have in mind a burning up of dwellings to make non-combatants scream for surrender. But the bombarding which I understand to be probable in regard to the Parisian outworks is an artillery attack upon French artillerists, with a view to be in a position to threaten harsher measures.

The deputies of the North German Parliament dined with

the King on Sunday evening—the evening of the day of the address—and were taken up next morning to the front to show them Paris. After their return from this glimpse of the great siege, they were entertained at dinner by the Crown Prince, and on Tuesday they commenced their journey home. It was a short but most successful visit to headquarters. No accident or illness hindered the ceremony that had such deep meaning for Germans. The Crown Prince of Prussia and the other Princes, the Generals, and Ministers were able to assist at the reading of the loyal address. Bismarck was there to see his plans bear fruit. Moltke was among the deputies, as an “honorary member,” because he was Moltke, and because, though not one of the deputation, he has a seat in the House. The same compliment was paid to a distinguished official, a “pacificator of kingdoms,” as the Chinese would call him, M. de Brauchitsch, the German Prefect of the Seine-et-Oise. There was method in the arrangement of the brilliant group at the top of the room, as much as there was remembrance of place and of person among the deputies who filled in the circle round Herr Simson whilst he read. The deputies had their honorary colleagues, the Princes were marshalled with all the exactness of a full-dress parade. To the right of King William stood his son and the other hereditary Princes. To the left stood the reigning Grand Dukes and Dukes of several German Duchies. The three lesser Kings of Germany were not present, but it was at the instance of one of them—the King of Bavaria—that the question of the Imperial Crown had been mooted, and when the South German Parliament shall have joined in the movement, there will be no backwardness in the South German Sovereigns to play their parts.

Dec. 22.—The King and his son, with Prince Adalbert, Admiral of the Fleet, have this morning inspected the Prussian sailors detached to Versailles. I happened to be passing at the moment, and saw at once that something must be going on by the gathering of people at the corner of the Avenue de Paris and the Rue St. Pierre. There was a small crowd of French and German loungers, braving the bleakest of December winds, and the dust of the great avenue blew fiercely against a line of sturdy seamen drawn up before the Préfecture. I have spoken in other letters of the historical memories which will cling to Versailles after these wonderful events of 1870. We can scarcely appreciate how men in after years will look back on the deeds of King William and Bismarck, of Trochu and Gambetta. We can scarcely appreciate the greatness of

the drama which is played at our very doors. Here were the German sailors, armed with needle-guns and carrying knapsacks in military fashion, drawn up before the Palace which Napoleon built for his Imperial Prefect, to be inspected by William of Hohenzollern. A "naval brigade" is the hobby of successful campaigns in modern times. Prince Adalbert has been for a long while at head-quarters, and now the sailors have appeared in force. But stay, I must come to details, or you will think that I speak of thousands instead of hundreds. In this case I speak of, about a hundred Prussian sailors, with some half-dozen officers, were drawn up before the Préfecture. There was no great formality about the inspection, though my foolish steed chose to take offence at the naval uniforms—the knapsacks and wide-brimmed hats—and to bear me at random among the observant natives. There was a well-ordered line of blue-jackets waiting for the King, and he came with right royal punctuality. No late hours for the old soldier of 1815. No hanging back by the Crown Prince, or the Prince Admiral. It was as chilly a morning as you could well imagine, and I thought myself "jolly under creditable circumstances" in riding towards the outposts at this early hour. But here was the future Emperor, and here were the Princes, calm and cheerful at anything o'clock A.M. The Royal party issued from the gate of the Préfecture, and passed along the line of sailors with lingering steps. It is all for the soldiers now, it may be all for the sailors in another war, or rather Germany may take her true place as a nation equally strong by sea as by land. She has so large a merchant shipping that her present naval inferiority to France is a mistake. The German Empire of twenty years hence will not only have an irresistible army, but a navy which can carry the troops to any given point, and this will be, we may hope, a guarantee of European peace.

The sailors drawn up before the Préfecture have been the cause of much speculation, and of many a wild rumour in Versailles. Some people insist on their being destined for service in the batteries; others—French, of course—suppose that the Prussian army is so reduced that sailors must, perforce, be employed to strengthen the diminished battalions. There is yet a probable report which assigns these lads in wide-brimmed hats to the captured gunboats of the Loire. This last is, I believe, the real solution of their presence at head-quarters. It would delight the Germans beyond everything to achieve a victory, however small, on the element which they hope to make their own. The sphere of the Loire is somewhat re-

stricted, but there is a chance that, even with a few tiny gun-boats, a dashing officer might do some good service below Tours as the ally of the dreaded "Uhlans."

I was struck by the hearty and cheerful look of King William when he inspected the German sailors. He had seemed a little more anxious and thoughtful when the news of the bloody work early in the month was arriving at Versailles, and now his air was decidedly free from care. Though no crushing victory has been gained, the Army of the Loire has been well answered for, and the question of Paris seems now again to be a mere question of time. Whatever grave doubts, or grave questions, may remain to be settled, there is not the pressing difficulty of an attempt to raise the siege. I have said that the King looked cheerful this morning, and the same may be stated of his Highness the Crown Prince. As to the Prince Admiral, he beamed with satisfaction. Here were his sailors at last getting a chance of useful work.

Your ideas of the tranquil stagnation of head-quarters would have received a rude shock yesterday afternoon. Squads of infantry, in forage caps, and, as usual, with bayonets fixed, guarded street after street, house after house, whilst a grand search was made for "contraband of war." *Mauvais sujets* of all sorts were sought for, and Versailles was cleared of her roughs at a sweep. Arms also were incidentally found, and I hear rumours of a French officer who had escaped from prison having been hunted out. The chief object was to rid the place of a dangerous class of its inhabitants. M. le Maire himself cannot much have regretted such a riddance; and as to the more timid citizens, they are delighted to be free from a dangerous class. They were not best pleased at first, before they understood the proceeding, for soldiers on guard at house doors and street corners are viewed askance by every one not in uniform. The hotels were entered and the forage caps of the searching party appeared at one point after another with unsparing persistence. The soldiers were very quiet and goodnatured where I saw them; and as to the reported violence in some parts of Versailles, I fancy that it was supposed to exist from inability to understand one another, rather than from a hostile feeling on the soldiers' part. They seem to me to take the whole thing quite coolly as a matter of ordinary fatigue duty.

We have heard some sharp firing to the east or north-east of Paris, and it is said that the French have put forward a feeler towards Le Bourget, but as yet there are no details of the affair. The only thing is that I hear that prisoners have been taken, so there has probably been some sort of fight at

the outworks. An expectation has been entertained of a German attack upon the French outworks to the eastward, and it may be that this attack has just begun, or that the French, seeing themselves threatened, have issued forth again to dispute the ground in their immediate front. One sortie is so likely to be followed by another, that I shall ride out to the south-eastern face of the fortress to see how things go near the Seine.

The last paragraph of this letter shows how little the great sortie of the 21st had disturbed the ordinary course of daily life at Versailles. For all that, it was a serious effort on the part of the French generals, and led to a rapid development of their siege operations by the Germans. In the King of Prussia's telegrams to Berlin, the sortie was described as made against Stains, Le Bourget, and Sevran. The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony, writing in the middle of the conflict, thus describes the encounter:—

Clichy, Dec. 21, 12 o'clock, Noon.—I am writing amidst the roar of a general artillery engagement, extending all round the north-east and eastern sides of the line, and know not when the room I am writing in, the windows of which have already been broken by a shell bursting outside, may become untenable. A good friend routed me out of a comfortable bed in Lagny this morning at six o'clock, with the information that fighting was imminent. Taking at once to horse, I heard nothing as I rode for the first two miles, but had abundant confirmation everywhere that my friend's intelligence was good. I overtook a pontoon train going at a trot towards Chelles; the officer believed that that was the point to be threatened, and the bridge might be useful to facilitate the passage of succours from the region of Champs, Malnoue, and Villiers. At Le Pin I found the three field batteries of the 24th Division quartered there, limbered up and taking the road. Their orders were likewise for Chelles, and I was tempted to accompany them. But as I spoke with the officers, there came down on the wind the sound of heavy firing from the direct front towards Clichy, and so I resisted the impulse to go to Chelles, where there is undoubtedly the most tempting district for an infantry attack, and headed up the slope to General Montbe's head-quarters here. The terrace of the château he inhabits commands a noble view of the whole country as far as Dugny and Gonesse, and this country is the theatre of the cannonade going on as I write. By eight o'clock, when I arrived, the fire was continuous. The centre of the German position is that fortified camp between Sevran

and Le Blanc Mesnil which I have described in your columns; and around Aulnay, in the very middle of that stretch, are the batteries chiefly concentrated. Our force engaged there, so far as I can learn, is as follows:—Three batteries of the Guards Artillery, three batteries contributed by the 23rd Division of the 12th Army Corps, and three or four batteries of the Artillery Division of the 12th Army Corps. There are reserve batteries in addition to this, but not engaged. Infantry and cavalry supports are partly drawn out, partly standing ready in their quarters. The 103rd Regiment, the garrison of Clichy, are on the plateau of Raincy, to watch the French infantry that have been observed concentrating in Bondy.

The French artillery seems engaged all round. Avron is firing over Villemomble at Clichy and Montfermeil, and Fort Noisy is vigorously following suit. Forts Romainville and Aubervilliers are playing on Livry and the vicinity, and the latter is throwing fire also in combination with de l'Est into Le Bourget. The French infantry stand concentrated between Bondy and Bobigny, one demonstration towards Clichy, and another towards Chelles, having been arrested early in the morning.

3.30 P.M.—With the above as preface, I must just enclose you the leaves torn out of my note-book, for the post leaves almost at once. All, however, seems restored to comparative quiet as I write, and the French are driven back at all points. There has during the day been no infantry fighting to speak of. One exception is mentioned in my notes. The 103rd exchanged several volleys with a body which made a rush out of Bondy about nine in the morning, but sustained little loss, and drove the enemy back. I cannot think but that the loss throughout the day has been trivial. Here are the leaves from my note-book:—

8.45 A.M.—Aubervilliers, de l'Est, and St. Denis seem to be concentrating their fire on Le Bourget. Six or eight French batteries have formed line with their left on Drancy, and are partly firing obliquely into Le Bourget at very short range, partly firing on the German line behind the inundations. I see shells bursting in Pont Iblon, also behind our batteries in Aulnay. French fire quite furious—half a dozen guns flashing out at once. It seems wild though. Ours as regular as the beats of the pendulum of a clock. An occasional shell from Avron.

9 A.M.—A rattle of musketry comes on the wind. It sounds from Le Bourget. Are the French infantry pressing on the battalion of Guards occupying it? It sounds like it. It grows louder, and then there is a lull. It springs up again

nearer Pont Iblon. The Guards must be in retreat towards Pont Iblon. The hellish shell-fire concentrated on the place was enough of itself to drive them out. There are the shells bursting all along the road towards Pont Iblon. They must mark the line of the retreating Guards—the shells following as they fall back. Now it seems as if they were safe behind Pont Iblon, for the batteries above the causeway through the inundations now open, their way free probably, since friends are no longer in front of their muzzles.

10 A.M.—The French, in the teeth of Pont Iblon's fire, have got up batteries on the *chaussée* before Le Bourget, and must be exchanging shots with the Pont Iblon batteries at point-blank range. A battery of ours at Sevran begins to speak in the direction of Bondy. I can see the shells from Aulnay bursting in the middle of the French batteries at Drancy, as the wind for the moment blows the smoke away. The gunners must some of them have gone in little pieces with that one. Still they hold their ground. Fire seems opening out towards us from Avron, and now and then I hear the waspish song of a Chassepôt bullet.

10.30 A.M.—The French are brightening up all round. The forts are, without exception, firing as hard as they can. That white smoke I see in the far distance must be the Lunette de Stains playing into the village of the same name. Why isn't there a sharp-toothed battery on the height above it? Does the firing go farther round towards Montmorency and Epinay? I cannot tell for certain; but the direction of the noise and the smoke would argue as much.

11 A.M.—Both sides at it ding-dong. No advantage on either side. Putting out of sight the forts, the French have the greatest strength of artillery engaged. I can make out, as I reckon, eighteen field batteries. The line of guns to the right of Drancy is lengthening. How they do fire, to be sure! Can they be aiming as they blaze away with such rapidity? Splash—splash—I see now with the glass most of their shells are bursting in the inundation in front of our position in Aulnay. That will break no bones. Why, they have set the Forest of Bondy on fire, on their own side of the water! If they mean to follow up with infantry, this will inconvenience them, if they are not salamanders. Kr-r-r-r, kr-r-r-r—one ought to know that sound if he ever heard it before. Where can they have got their mitrailleuses at work? That means close quarters. Have they got their infantry edged forward on the sly at some point we can't see here, and are they backed up by the mitrailleuse? Why, the sound is from two points at once. The glass explains the mystery. Near Drancy, and

on to Sevrans, if it were not for the interruptions, runs the Soissons Railway. Here, by Bondy, and so round to Ville-momble and Gagny, runs the Cherbourg lines. As I live, there is a mitrailleuse train on each line! General Montbe sees it first—the locomotive puff-puffing out from behind the trees of Drancy, having the mitrailleuse waggons before it. There goes the kr-r-r-r again! The concern is playing dodging tactics—it comes out to fire, and scuttles back to load. Another mitrailleuse train is at the same game on our left front—on the Cherbourg line—that is the song of some of the bullets. I wonder how Von Schönberg and Hammerstein, and the rest of the 103rd fellows on Raincy are relishing their closer contiguity.

Noon.—An orderly rides in with the information that in the direction of Noisy-le-Grand French infantry are pushing forward, and that a battery is established, and has opened fire in the same place, up the valley against Chelles; also that all the batteries south of Avron are at work playing on the horseshoe. This has a serious meaning. The artillery in the neighbourhood of Chelles will be able to honour none of our drafts now, if we should want them. We may need them. The fire is as hot as ever, the French activity seeming unabated. Our guns are pounding away in a steady business-like way—they won't spurt. Artillery spurts never pay—infantry spurts sometimes, but not so often as is generally thought. The "walruses" by Sevrans are asleep—it is evident we are not firing a gun that is not a field one.

12.45 P.M.—Here comes a 24th Division battery past Clichy towards Sevrans. It is one of those that left Le Pin in the morning. This is reassuring as to the state of things to our south by Chelles and the horseshoe. The battery could not well be spared if it were very hot there. A shell—it must have come from Fort Noisy—bursts in the battery as it traverses the space at our feet between Clichy and Livry; one horse—a detachment beast—is down, that is all. They have got the range either from Avron or Noisy, perhaps from both. Where we are standing is hot quarters now. Bang! General, you are not hurt, are you? A close shave, in all conscience,—a 24 lb. shell came right in amongst us, alighting among the stacked arms of a picket, and sending the needle-guns flying right and left, and for that matter the men too: not a soul hurt, but all smothered with gravel and mud. I don't care about a piece for a souvenir, thank you, Herr Lieutenant. I shan't forget the shave in a hurry. Are you a married man, General Montbe?

1 P.M.—Our fire is telling. The batteries on the Le Bourget

chaussée are shutting up. They are retreating. What is that burst of black smoke behind them? The French must be trying to burn Le Bourget. They have succeeded so far; there is a jet of fire, but the place must be washed, surely, in the composition ballet-girls use for their skirts—it won't take to burning kindly. I suppose it is the wet straw that raises so dense a smoke.

1.30 P.M.—A lull. The French must be changing position. The lull is only on their side, ours is pegging away as if driven by steam. There are the Le Bourget batteries again, much nearer the village; they must have limbered up and been falling back, and suddenly unlimbered again.

1.45 P.M.—There is a gap in the line of batteries on the right of Drancy. The centre batteries seem to have dropped out. What is the artillery order? If it was cavalry, I should say they were retiring by columns of troops from the centre. The flank batteries have wakened up again as hot as ever—to cover the movements of the others, no doubt.

2.30 P.M.—French all but silenced, and in full retreat. All the firing we now see is our guns milling away steadily as if paid by the piece, and the French forts of de l'Est, du Nord, and Aubervilliers. In the distance, under the hill of Ecouen, which shuts in the horizon, I see smoke rising. Perhaps Dugny or Gagny may have been fired. Perhaps a shell has lodged in a straw-stack.

3 P.M.—Hardly anything audible to our north front. Noise still from direction of Montfermeil, Chelles, and the south. The neighbourhood of Clichy, for the time, seems to be attracting exceptionally hot fire. Shells are falling on the slope below us with disagreeable frequency.

3.45 P.M.—Everything quieter. The General thinks of going out towards Raincy, and I shall accompany him.

Evening.—To save to-day's post, I this afternoon tore from my note-book the memoranda made from hour to hour of the artillery battle which had been raging from an early hour, and sent them on just as I had jotted them down. I scarcely like to reflect on the manner in which they must have read, if indeed they could have been read at all, but as they were all I had on which to base a connected narrative, the want of them forbids that undertaking now.

The visit to Raincy, which was contemplated when I sent off my first parcel, was not carried out. Although in other parts of the line, at least to the northward, the firing seemed to be dying away as the twilight came on, shells continued to be thrown towards Clichy, with perhaps greater frequency than in the earlier part of the afternoon. About five o'clock the

fire from the German guns about Aulnay, which had been dying away as it ceased to evoke a response, suddenly flared up again, and continued very brisk for about a quarter of an hour. It appeared to me as if the French were disposed to halt at least some of their batteries for the night in advance of the position out of which they had come in the morning, and that the warm fire of their opponents was intended to prevent the execution of this design. The French guns, which had been utterly silent for half an hour, could not refrain from replying to this fire, however feebly, and they were unlimbered—a couple of batteries, in the flat some distance to the north-east of Bobigny. It was very pretty, in the all but darkness, to watch the rapid flashes, and the shells bursting in the air, like a comet that has knocked out his brains against some aerial rock. But the pyrotechnic display was not of long continuance. The German fire was too steady and rapid to admit of a lengthened illumination of the inundation waters on the part of the French by the bursting shells on their margin. All grew silent and dark again over against Bobigny, and it was as if the French array—the forts, whose grey embrasures were visible in the daylight, the serried batteries of artillery which had maintained their share of the day's din with so much spirit, and the dense battalions of infantry, men who had done nothing all day but hold themselves in reserve—as if all these were blotted off the black face of the night. But not for long. From the far-off firing platform of Fort de l'Est suddenly flashed out the electric light, followed by a flash that heralded the dull thud which, as it seemed quite a minute after, struck the ear. At what de l'Est was firing we could not tell—if indeed at anything, and not in pursuance of that Gascon custom to which the Paris forts are addicted of having the “last word” in every affair, no matter what its issue. Presently there rose against the sky another light farther south—directly between Clichy and Paris—a whole chain of light so numerous that they blended as in one great fire, and made the heavens bright above them. These were the bivouac fires of the French camping in the open in the position they had taken up on the previous night, their right resting on Bondy, their left on Bobigny. There they lie—foiled indeed in whatever they contemplated to-day, if it was of an actively offensive nature, but still stubbornly refusing to relinquish it. They are at hand for anything. To-morrow their infantry may be raging against the needle-guns of the Saxons lying before us on Raincy. To-morrow their field artillery, changing its direction, and backed by Avron, may be pounding inconveniently

into Montfermeil. To-morrow, changing its front, the Bondy-Bobigny force may be supporting a division farther to the south or a heavy attack towards Chelles. There they lie, at all events, the object of an undefined uneasiness, in which there is no trepidation, but something of nervousness. Ah, well, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. What is the *raison d'être* of this great powder-burning demonstration of to-day? It could hardly have been intended as an attempt to break through. Speculations in the early part of the day were various. It might be a reconnaissance in force to discover, by drawing their fire, whether the besiegers had any heavy artillery mounted on the works between Sevan and Pont Iblon, with future intentions towards the forts. It might have been that, in the knowledge of the railways being in use as far as Gonesse and Sevan, the speculation might have been ventured that to these termini were centring the siege guns, and that under a heavy artillery fire the infantry might get the chance of making a dash on an exploring and destroying expedition. But, in my opinion, the cue was given to the motive of the day's work in the terms of a communication made by General von Montbe, at his hospitable dinner-table. All day long heavy columns of French infantry, massed on and about the slope of Avron, and as far forward as Neuilly, had been threatening the gap of Chelles. I believe I have already referred to this alluvial tract as the probable area of a sortie. It presents several obvious advantages. It is quite flat, is open in the topographical sense all the way to Lagny—all the way to Châlons for that matter—and the French, holding Neuilly as they do, already sit astride of the flat country, and can make their dispositions without annoyance or exposure on the same level as their succeeding operations. Then there is no river to cross. But for that somewhat sturdy obstacle, the Saxons, there would be a straight run home unobstructed by water or broken ground all the way, as I have said, to Lagny; and behind a sallying force there stands up the formidable Avron, a most judicious bottle-holder, and something more. No doubt there are disadvantages to set against all these advantages. This world is a vale of crosses, and nobody can expect to have it all his own way. The bluff of Montfermeil enfilades a force coming up the flat towards Chelles as soon as it shows out from Neuilly. The height behind Chelles looks direct in the face of any such force; and, owing to circumstances attributable to the Germans, any contemplation of a hostile force on the part of the heights of Chelles would not be so harmless as normally is the case. These heights,

too, narrow the fair way considerably, and from the outset it is the reverse of too large. Still, I have wondered that the French, who have essayed far less eligible ground for a sortie in a physical sense, should not have tried this. It was clear that I was not alone in my opinion, for Chelles was the line taken by the 24th Division artillery this morning from Le Pin. The French columns—a whole division it was known—showed opposite the gap, ready to throw themselves into it. But they knew of old the results of a concentration at any point of the deadly field artillery of the Germans. Had they come on directly, and with no diversion, what would have hindered it, but that the Saxon batteries from the Marne to the inundations, the Guards batteries from Livry to Gonesse, should have been waiting there for them across the throat of the gap at Chelles, and on the crest of Montfermeil? Wherefore was made a great artillery demonstration, supported with infantry, to look in earnest on the north-eastern face, in the hopes to draw off the artillery from the Chelles positions, and leave the coast comparatively clear for an attack. The plan might have succeeded with a weaker artillery than that possessed by the Germans—that it did not, as it was partially successful, I am not quite prepared to assert. Anyhow, the French division, about two o'clock, thought itself justified in advancing to the attack up the northern bank of the Marne. What happened is to me as yet involved in obscurity. The sequence of General Montbe's communication was, that after a good deal of fighting up to about half-past four the French had not succeeded in gaining any ground, and had then slowly fallen back into their old position behind Neuilly. Now, however, when I come to head-quarters here, I find no concealment made of what seems to be an assured fact, that Ville Evrart and La Maison Blanche, the two keys to the Prussian outpost line athwart the alluvial plain, were taken this afternoon by the French and are now held by them; and that there is a design of retaking them to-night under cover of the darkness. It lends colour to this that the Saxon batteries lent to the Guards for Aulnay should have passed Clichy before I left it, on their way towards Chelles, accompanied by a battalion of infantry; and the movement indicates in any case an expectation on the part of the Germans that the hot work to-morrow will be in the latter neighbourhood. I have heard as yet neither tidings nor firing. It will be morning before I can obtain any further intelligence. I only hope General Montbe's version is the right one.

Many circumstances have occurred during this campaign tending to imperil the continued existence of the Geneva Convention.

Another has occurred to-night. The French have collected their wounded in the village of Bondy—fearfully wounded most of them must be, for shell-splinters do not make neat holes in men. Bondy being in a line with the front of their position, and one of the keys to it in the event of that position being assaulted, they have run up the red cross, and doubtless there would be the cry of “brutes and barbarians” if that cross were not respected. It has not been fired on, but none the less it is a flagrant abuse of the terms of the Convention, which stipulates expressly that no Feld Lazarette shall be erected in a position too near the front or of value in a military sense. Neither side has stuck closely to this definition, and the consequence is that each had stories of asserted atrocities to narrate against the other. Speaking of wounded, our losses at Clichy during the day consisted of a field-postman’s foot damaged, a soldier severely wounded by a splinter, and a *krankenträger* cut in two by a shell. The total losses on the German side must have been very small, and I cannot think the French have suffered at all severely.

It may not be new to your readers that the representatives of the British National Society at Meaux have wisely thought it their duty to break through the trammels of rules and regulations for once to administer to the pressing wants of the hordes of French prisoners passing through Lagny on their way to Germany. One must visit Lagny to appreciate the character of these needs. I was told of one batch that came in so ravenous with hunger that the men grubbed in the gutter after turnip-tops and bones, and turned over dirt heaps in search for stray crusts of bread. At Meaux, when the train containing these unfortunates passed through, the Society people threw hams into the carriages, which were seized and worried by the ravenous men as dogs worry bones. Between wounded and prisoners, the Prussian organization for the time broke down. It is little wonder. The average daily quota of prisoners from the 1st up to the 17th was 1,000 men; the number of wounded averages little less. Lagny did its best, but it is never a great place, and its resources have been severely taxed for months past. The cry of the great distress reached Meaux, and Captain Neville and his colleagues could not withstand it. On the 17th Mr. Barrington Kennett came on to Lagny with twenty huge cases of preserved meat, next day followed Captain Neville with 200 leviathan loaves. Mr. Kennett was left in charge of the arrangements, and every one speaks in terms of enthusiasm as to the manner in which he has accomplished what he set himself to do. The Prussian organization has righted again

—it is never long on its broadside—and now it has been arranged that every prisoner on his way through shall receive a lump of bacon and another of bread, while the British Society, in case of another collapse, keep in reserve a store of preserved meat and bread. The horrors of Lagny for the month transcend all imagination. Fancy an average of 1,000 wounded men pouring in day by day—a fresh thousand every day—unfed, their wounds undressed, bitter cold, and jolted almost to distraction. There is no hospital in the place. No hospital, had it been as big as new St. Thomas's twice over, would have sufficed. Sheds, houses, railway vans, the lamp-room in the railway station, the church, the Mairie, were turned into hospitals. I saw one court-yard on which opened four or five squalid rooms. Into these eighty wounded Bavarians had perforce to be placed for the night, supperless, fireless—hopeless, I should think, in their utter misery. In one day came 1,800 wounded, nearly 100 of whom were officers. The men were put into the church—there was no other place for them. During the night a certain man was wanted particularly for some reason. Diligent search was made for him among the masses of wounded men, but it was like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. The search was unsuccessful. As you walk about the streets of Lagny you are continually meeting strange "mounted men." No, it is a man on the back of another, the man carried having a leg swathed in bandages. Now comes a pair carrying a man in what boys call a king's chair. All are on their way to the station, the platform of which is continually littered with a kind of luggage that makes one's heart ache. There, at full length on the litter, lie the poor broken fellows, looking up at you with their great, calm, patient eyes. I saw a clumsy fellow tumble over one of the prostrate forms, and all the chiding he received was a wan pinched smile. There is a lady at Lagny whose name deserves to be written in letters of gold wherever are recorded the names of devoted philanthropists—Madame Simon, the lady superintendent of the Saxon ambulances. Day and night has this noble woman wrestled with the torrent of human misery that has surged upon Lagny since the beginning of the month.

The church of Lagny has come to strange uses: last week a refuge for 1,700 wounded men; two nights ago the barracks for 1,000 Bavarians—a new draft pressing to the front; last night the prison-house of some 1,200 Frenchmen. I went among them into the stench—stench and scene reminding me of the church of Donchéry the day after Sedan. Most of the

prisoners I saw were boys—some the merest children, unable to carry a gun, much less to use one. Their guards were very kind and gentle with them, poor wretches; it would have been difficult to be harsh with creatures so utterly down and crushed.

Forepost, Forest of Bondy, before Clichy, Dec. 22.—The French are humbugs. I made sure that, in the language of Artemus Ward, we were going to have a “fite” to-day. Instead of this everything is decently quiet—not altogether so, but quiet enough to allow of a soldier obtaining his meals by the application of fire—which is something. This morning, before leaving head-quarters, I obtained information as regarded the positions before Chelles, which satisfied me that General von Montbe had been wrong in the *couleur de rose* view he took of the position of the posts in the neighbourhood of La Maison Blanche (an old friend of mine) and Ville Evrart. Indeed I had heard yesterday afternoon, although not from head-quarters, that the French had taken these positions, but too late to include the information in my letter. It appears that at six o'clock last night the whole of the 106th Saxon Regiment simultaneously fell upon Ville Evrart and La Maison Blanche. The latter, an outpost, was first taken. The capture included a major and five officers, the former of whom must have been making the rounds, and about fifty men. Ville Evrart followed, but it contained 500 or more defenders, who were all made prisoners. One of the enclosures in the rear of the building still remained for the night in the hands of the French; but in the morning the Saxons gained a footing west of this. This morning the French looked very threatening for the time; they sent forward about two batteries against Chelles, which coalesced with the troops yet remaining in Ville Evrart. But a hot fire from Noisy-le-Grand and the opposite bank of the river between it and Gournay was enough to cause a retreat with some precipitation. I would desire to describe my present position, but time will not serve. I must mention, however, that Le Bourget was retaken yesterday afternoon—I am told that it never was altogether lost—by the same regiment of the Guards who originally occupied it, along with reinforcements, and that about 300 prisoners fell to their lot. I may also state that the head-quarters' estimate of the French loss for yesterday is about 3,000 killed and wounded; but I think this must be an over-calculation. The French infantry seem to have retired in part from the neighbourhood of Bondy, where, however, still flies the red-cross flag. I can see the men quite easily without a glass, going about their cooking

and other avocations. We are led to expect that the bombardment of Mont Avron from the batteries in the neighbourhood of Montfermeil will commence to-morrow.

Pont Iblon, in front of Gonesse, December 23.—The air was clearer yesterday than on any day within my recollection since I have been before Paris. From the advanced forepost in the Forest of Bondy, from which I looked out upon the beautiful panorama, Montmartre did not seem two miles off. I could discern the windows of the Cathedral of St. Denis far round on the right front. Bondy, directly in our front, seemed so close that you might almost send a stone the length of its church steeple, and yet the French were in it, although they kept very quiet and out of sight. Still, occasionally a few were to be seen “prowling about,” and the smoke which hung in the air behind Bondy marked their camp fires. On the left front was the abrupt rise of the long ridge crowned by Forts Noisy and Rosny; right between us and the latter is the lower blunt-headed summit which we have learned to detest under the name of Mont Avron. Noisy at intervals is wreathing itself in white smoke, which shows out in fine contrast against the blue horizon. As you watch it and the whole picture spread out before you in its loveliness, it is difficult indeed to realize that the foreground is full of fighting men, and that the smoke is the signal that a deadly missile has been sent hurtling through the air. But here comes something to remind you that smiles and peace are not synonymous. Carry him gently over the rough ground—ah! I fear, from the look of him, he will not long feel whether he is handled roughly or tenderly. That shell you heard explode in the foreground tore half his hip away as he stood leaning against the wall; he is quivering with incipient tetanus, and the blood is dripping on to the ground as it soaks through the canvas of the stretcher. How tenderly Colonel Dietrich speaks to the poor fellow! Ah, colonel, no wonder that you sigh and turn away at that faint reply to your question, “Landwehrmann, Herr Oberst.” In that word, “Landwehrmann,” uttered by that poor bleeding soldier, is a volume of meaning. It means a widow and orphans, a shattered home, the breadwinner of a family struck down. There were gay lads standing about, brisk young regulars, and eighteen-year-old volunteers; but the shell spares them and whizzes straight on to the man who has mouths to fill. How one feels to hate war, as the *krankenträger* carries the man out of our sight! The whole regiment—the 103rd—is on the foreposts to watch the French, and there is a squeeze in the little huts which have been run up to shelter the men. Strange dog-holes they

are! The men are lying so close that it seems in places they are in layers among the straw. The officers have a separate place, which is nearly as full as are the huts of the men. There is a stove, but it smokes; so does everybody in the place, and you cannot discern clearly the features of the man sitting opposite to you. Faintly it is apparent that he is eating sausage with a pocket-knife. Yes, that is a tumblerful of neat rum which he is tendering you. It is so strong that it would bring the water to your eyes, only that the wood smoke has done so long ago. Somebody is asleep—at least vociferous snoring ought to be an indication of sleep. He must have tried very hard to sleep, or he could not have been successful in the din. But, then, remember that this regiment has been on this forepost duty without a break for three whole days, and your wonder will not be that one can sleep, but that the whole are not asleep.

Here comes the orderly with the welcome order that the relief is coming, and we shall get to dinner in Major von Schönberg's château. The good Major is in great fettle. He has a wife in Saxonland—a lady for whom I have an intense respect, although I do not know her. I respect her for two reasons, first, because she is the Major's wife; secondly, because she has had the thoughtfulness to send her husband—by the field-post of course—a couple of barrels of Bavarian beer. These barrels are ever in the Major's mind, and on his tongue. He shouts, "Hurrah for the barrels!" when the orderly brings the tidings of the relief.

The relief arrived, we returned to the château, and spent a delightful evening. The beer turned out perfection. There was a lack of beds in the château, which, however, as regarded myself, was supplemented with characteristic Saxon courtesy. A captain gave up to me his bed, and slept himself on the straw on the floor. About four in the morning I was awakened by a shake on the shoulder. As, half awake, I looked up, there stood over me, looming very large, an Uhlan, with his throat wrapped up in many and preternaturally-complicated folds of comforter. He handed me a paper, and shoved a candle under my nose. What could the man mean? Was this an order for my immediate execution, or had that rich ninety-third cousin died and left me his heir? I sleepily read over the paper, and found it was an order to turn out at once and march my company, with the rest of the brigade, to the neighbourhood of Sevrans. Where was my company? Who had a right to order me—a free-born British Christian, and a neutral—thus peremptorily to turn out in so cold a morning? All at once I remembered I was in the

captain's bed, and the sagacious idea occurred to me that the order must be intended for him. So it turned out, and the captain did the same. There was a general turn out. The 2nd Brigade of the 23rd Division consists of the 102nd and 103rd Regiments, and there being, it seemed, symptoms that the restless French contemplated another attack on Le Bourget, this brigade was ordered to march to Sevran, to stand there in reserve in case they should be wanted. On we went, through the fiercely cold morning air—the breaths freezing into spangles on the beards, and little icicles forming on the tips of the moustaches. Everything seemed quiet. In Livry we met the Saxon Schützen Regiment going on to strengthen the Bondy foreposts. How well their black plumes looked in the grey light of the early morning! Livry, save for them, was empty. A couple of forlorn turkeys, ready plucked for Christmas, hung mournfully in a *marketender's* window. The customers had gone away, and might never come back. When the brigade reached the halting ground all was still quiet. There was nothing to be seen, and therefore I rode forward through Sevran and Aulnay. Between these villages the *emplacements* for the field guns were all appropriately occupied, and the gunners stood at their posts; no infantry was to be seen. But as soon as I cleared Aulnay, and got up the gentle rise on the top of which runs the great Lille road, which passes through Le Bourget, it was apparent how thorough were the preparations. There were in position six or eight batteries of artillery all along the rear of the inundations, and on the slope rising behind Le Blanc Mesnil and Pont Iblon. Farther back stood other battalions in reserve. The great road itself was clear: I could see along it right into Le Bourget, a mile and a half to the front. But right and left of it stood the battalions of infantry, eleven of them, the whole of the 2nd Division of the Guards. Here stood the pink and pride of the Prussian army—the Kaiser Franz, Kaiser Alexander, Königin Elizabeth, and Königin Augusta regiments. The Elizabeths had one battalion away out to the front there, holding Le Bourget, and have only two battalions on the ground here. The artillery consisted of that belonging to the 2nd Division, and also of the artillery division of the Grand Army Corps. At the cross-roads, as I ride on, there meets me a quaint little figure, with a knot of officers behind him. His head seems literally “in a bag;” one can see nothing but a pair of keen eyes and a pair of white moustaches. Don't laugh at the funny-looking old man: you see before you a soldier than whom there is not a gallanter in all the German hosts—one who, though a general, ever lusts to be in the

hick of the fray, fighting with his own good sword. The owner of the white moustache is General von Budritzki, the Commander of the 2nd Division of the Guards, the general with whom rests the dispositions of the day. He tells me, as I halt for a gossip with his staff, that he *fears* there will be no fighting to-day. It is clear he is longing for a brush with the troops who gave him so much trouble on the 30th of October, when it fell to him to retake Le Bourget. That same Le Bourget—out to the front on the farther side of the inundation—seems to stand strangely isolated. If the Queen Elizabeths occupying it look behind—a custom they are not addicted to—it must have a tendency to make them nervous that there is nothing in the way of supports all the way back to Pont Iblon. But behind Pont Iblon there are supports enough in all conscience. Depend on it, the Elizabeths will stick to Le Bourget as long as they can; and if they have to fall back, they will only entice the French forward into the half-burnt, half-shattered man-trap. A French occupation of Le Bourget, always temporary, simply means so many French prisoners.

It is now one o'clock, and looking forward towards Drancy I see no move on the part of the French, whose fires are smoking in front of Bobigny. Behind us, in Pont Iblon, there stand the Guards, waiting in the cold for whatever may turn up. I think, for my own part, that nothing will turn up, and that we shall all go home to dinner. I know Major von Schönberg is thinking of the beer again as he stands in that breezy meadow beside Sevrans.

The chief loss of the day before yesterday was sustained by the 1st Battalion of the Queen Elizabeth Regiment, old friends and good friends of mine. The battalion, which your readers may remember headed the attack which retook Le Bourget on the 30th of October, has again had terrible reason to remember that village. Of its remnant of officers left, five more went down the day before yesterday, and 117 men were killed and wounded. The chief, Hauptmann von Altmann, seems to bear a charmed life. He had, on the 30th October, fourteen bullet-holes through his loose mackintosh, and not a single wound. The day before yesterday his officers fell around him, but he never was touched. I have to record a severe mishap to a very dear friend, young Freiherr von Brockdorff, a lieutenant in the Kaiser Franz Regiment, and the nephew of General von Moltke. He was shot through the chest near the close of the action of the day before yesterday. A brighter lad I never knew. He was a student at college, in Berlin, when the war broke out, and joined the army at once. He

had won his commission and the Iron Cross. Now the war has brought him something else. I have just seen him. He is lying nearly comatose, and very weak. He believes it was the splinter of a shell that drilled the jagged hole in his side; but I think it must have been a stray Chassepôt bullet, or one of the mitrailleuse balls which the cuirassed train sent over. His elder brother a lieutenant in the Thuringian Uhlan Regiment, has been sent round by General von Moltke to see how fares it with the lad. I fear the tidings which he will have to take back must be the reverse of good. The number of prisoners altogether taken on the day before yesterday amounts to about 1,000, a large proportion of whom are sailors.

I think I have mentioned that there came into the German lines, in the region of the 12th Army Corps, regular files of the Paris newspapers by a machinery which I can only allude to. I learn that there is great reason to suspect that the papers so transmitted are written and printed expressly for this purpose, and that our "trusted courier" is a double traitor. One of the officers lately sent out from Paris saw there a paper containing a totally different list of prices of provisions from that contained in "our" impression of the same paper of the same date. The dodge is creditable to the 'cuteness of the Parisians. It seems provisions are really much dearer in Paris than we thought them. Everything still quiet. Probably the troops will soon be sent back to quarters. The threatening symptoms, however, still continue; they are only postponed. As it is, not a single shot has been fired to-day on either side in my hearing. This, of course, covers the statement that the bombardment of Mont Avron has not begun.

Margency, Dec. 23, Evening.—At two o'clock this afternoon the artillery duel recommenced, and continued till dark. The firing from the forts and field batteries at Drancy and Courneuve was very heavy. Our reply was from between Aulnay and Sevran. About 30,000 French infantry stood in line from Courneuve to Bobigny, in the rear of Clichy. Two attempts were made to assault Le Bourget, but neither made any head. The French are still in position, and receiving continued reinforcements by railway. The renewal of fighting is expected to-morrow. Our bombardment has not yet begun.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE Parisians had so far ceased to believe in the military capacity of their leaders, that the failure of the sortie of December 21 affected them much less than might otherwise have been expected.

The Special Paris Correspondent wrote on Christmas Eve :—

The Parisians are singularly unlucky in their weather, and bad luck pursues bad management. In their first great sortie of the 30th November, the army left all its warm wrappers in Paris ; there came on a fierce cold with a biting wind, and the Intendance of the army is so villanous, that it was found impossible to provide the soldiers with their warm clothing, although they were but three miles distant from Paris. After a delay of three weeks, in which the weather was warm but wet, and in which it seemed that the generals were only waiting for the roads to dry and harden a little, that the guns might pass along, another great sortie was attempted on the shortest day, the 21st. It partly succeeded, and partly failed ; but instantly another severe frost set in, and the army is again in great difficulties. This time, however, it is not so much because the soldiers are ill-clad that they are hard pressed. They feel the cold bitterly—it is a very trying time, but their coverlets are at hand. Indeed, most of the troops have been made to carry an extra wrapper in the form of a breastplate. Their knapsacks are thrown aside, and they have a wrapper arranged fourfold hanging from their necks, tied with a belt round their waists and reaching down to their legs. This warm padding has all the advantage of a breastplate in battle, and of a muff when the hands are idle. The worst of the frost, which is four or five degrees below zero on the Centigrade scale, is not at present that it chills the men, but that it hardens the ground. The ground is like iron, and this is terrible, seeing that the operations which are now in progress depend as much on the spade and the pickaxe as on cannon and Chassepôts.

In explaining to you what is being done, or about to be done, I must forewarn you that much of what I have to say is mere inference. I have been out to the advanced posts all along the line from Ville Evrart to Groslay. I have seen a good deal, and as far as a mere civilian can judge, have come to certain conclusions, which you will take for what they are worth. The plan of operations is most carefully concealed ; the press is silent, and one of the journals, the *Patrie*, is

suspended for three days, because last night it ventured to speak of a particular movement as in progress. You will not find any two persons here of one mind as to what General Trochu intends. Most persons tell me that they have not the most remote conception of what he can be after: his famous plan is to them a perfect puzzle. A great many people say that General Trochu has no plan at all, and that he is only attempting to amuse the Parisians and keep up their spirits by a series of fireworks. The General has his faults—he is apt to be undecided, he thinks too long and talks and writes too much; but he is a very able man, and he is too much in earnest to be capable of mere play. Indeed, one of the theories which I hear broached is this—"Trochu wants to be killed,—that's all;" and you should hear how his Staff speak of his intrepidity on needless occasions. I do not think it is right to assume, as so many of his critics do, that General Trochu is a fool, because his scheme is not apparent; or that his army is composed of cowards because it is not successful. Coleridge gave some wise advice when he said, "Count yourself ignorant of a man's understanding until you understand his ignorance." Pardon me, therefore, if I venture to believe that General Trochu is serious, and that his operations are worthy of attentive study. The view of them which I now present to your notice you will not accept as authoritative, but you can easily judge whether or not it is at least plausible.

General Trochu is a man of great tenacity. He is very slow of decision—too slow; but he holds to an idea once formed with extraordinary firmness. It is natural to conclude that, having formed in his own mind a plan for the deblockade of Paris which he could not put into execution until the tenth week of the siege, he would be unwilling to give up what he had taken so long to mature. If he cannot work out his idea in one way, he will try to work it out in another. Now, what was his idea? Many persons will tell you that he expected by gallant and hard fighting to cut his way through the three lines of circumvallation which the Prussians have drawn around Paris. This is the idea which suggests itself to ninety-nine out of a hundred Frenchmen; and a good deal of the language of various generals, especially that of General Ducrot in his famous address to the army, goes to support it. General Trochu may for a moment have harboured the expectation that his plan of operations, commenced on the 29th of November, might, by the concurrence of another French army coming up the valley of the Seine, effect a scission of the Prussian lines. But without such help from the outside—help which was in any case problematical, and which became

more than doubtful in the ignorance of the French generals as to their point of junction—General Trochu is too cautious not to understand perfectly that nothing could be more hazardous than to attempt to cut his way through the Prussian lines with the Army of Paris. There was a chance, perhaps, if the Army of the Loire were as good as reported—a fair chance that the operations he was about to commence might end in such a result. But it was necessary to count on such a result only as a possible surplusage. In reality, General Trochu is too good a critic not to know that the triple line of investment is inexpugnable by direct attack, and he is much too wary to knock his head against a stone wall.

What, then, was his plan, which we may assume to be still his plan? The plan, in so far as it is at all intelligible, is to interfere with the communications of the investing army. The German army, notwithstanding the requisitions which it makes on the surrounding country, draws its chief supplies from Germany by the Strasburg Railway. At Chelles, upon the Marne, there is a great dépôt; and from this point the convoys of provisions bifurcate—the greater number wending their way southwards, and then westward to Versailles and St. Germain; while a large portion wend their way northwards to supply the army north of Paris. If these convoys could be intercepted—if they could be seriously troubled—if they could be forced to make a wide détour, the besieging army would be in a bad way. It would run short of supplies, and at the same time it would not be easy for the forces in one direction to come to the relief of forces in another direction. The idea of General Trochu, then, seems to have been that he would run a wedge out upon one or other of the lines of communication leading from the railway station at Chelles. Against which of the lines would he run his wedge? He chose the southern line of convoys, both because it is the more important to the army of investment, and because by seizing the ridge which dominates the Marne at Villiers, he might hope to work his way gradually on the heights of Sucy-en-Brie, and to Villeneuve St. Georges. In this view he had a right to say that Bourget was of no importance to him. It was enough for him to cut the communications on one side; so he gave all his attention to the heights south of the Marne, which have their key at Villiers. On the 29th of November he went out to seize these heights. His bridges broke, and he could not proceed till the following day, and then, though his army fought well, it failed. It failed from a variety of causes, which it is needless here to recapitulate. The troops were withdrawn, and now, after three weeks given to rest and

reorganization, they are called upon for a new effort; but, as far as I can make out, this new effort is only a development of the old idea in a new direction.

The one tangible result of the first great sortie was that the French troops came to occupy the plateau of Avron in advance of the Fort de Rosny. They have fortified it strongly, and mounted it with guns of immense range, that reach even to Chelles. It appears that General Trochu could not give up the idea of operating upon Chelles, and upon the convoys thence proceeding. He had failed to endanger these convoys on their southern line. He has now attempted to drive his wedge into the northern line. Bourget was of no importance to him according to his original idea; it is all-important to him now that he has to push this idea in a new direction. The attack on Bourget on the 21st was no feint—no diversion; it was a real attack, which will be followed up, and which has a vital connection with the simultaneous attack on Neuilly-sur-Marne, on Ville Evrart, and on the Maison Blanche. You are aware—if you received my last letter—that the attack on the position indicated by these last three names was successful; but I expressed some doubt whether the French troops would be able to hold it, dominated as it is by the heights of Noisy-le-Grand on the south, and by those of Montfermeil on the north—the latter, according to the Ordnance map, having an elevation of 116 mètres. The Maison Blanche is but two miles from Chelles, and it seems important that the French should be driven out of it; but they mean to hold it if they can, and they are making every preparation to hold it to the uttermost. They are making entrenchments and all kinds of barricades and earthworks in their new position; and here comes their difficulty. A fierce frost has set in to hinder all their efforts, and the earth is like a rock. It seems as if the elements were fighting against these Frenchmen. It is bad enough that the army should be starved with cold. There was a sentinel found frozen at his post last night. But here is something still worse for the plans of General Trochu, whatever they may be—that to construct earthworks in such a season requires superhuman strength. So much depends on the weather, that no one can foresee the end of this; but in the meantime the soldiers of General Vinoy are doing their best to make their new position secure within easy range of Chelles. While to General Vinoy was allotted the task of seizing upon Ville Evrart and the Maison Blanche, which he did without difficulty—almost, indeed, without firing a shot—to General Ducrot was allotted that of taking Bourget. He got up to Drancy and to the

Grosley Farm; but although he got into Bourget on one side, he was unable to hold it. Many of the troops have been removed, and most persons imagine that the attempt on Bourget is over. I hear the croakers say, "It is all over, it is all over; you will hear no more of this business, it is all humbug." They are much too confident, these croakers. If a man croaks all round, he is sure to be sometimes right, as the great art of betting is to bet against all events. It may be that the attack on Bourget will have to be given up; but it is not humbug, and we can conclude nothing from the inaction produced by the weather. The troops are withdrawn as much as possible from the cold, and those who are left are engaged in making, slowly, with enormous difficulty, trenches, by which Bourget may be approached from the side of Drancy. Do not suppose, therefore, that because you hear of no fighting, nothing is being done. The only difference is that the troops are fighting with pickaxe and spade, instead of with powder and shot. I fancy you will hear soon of a renewed attack on Bourget; and when General Trochu has an idea, you may be pretty sure that, to use a celebrated phrase, he will peg away at it.

The French deserve to succeed for their perseverance, and for a power of endurance which seemed beyond the reach of Parisian nature; but their stupidities and blunders are innumerable, and sadly interfere with one's sympathies. Few of us expected to see the sublime spectacle of so much calm fortitude and indomitable submission to suffering as Paris presents this Christmas Eve; but, on the other hand, one expected from Frenchmen intelligence—and at least ordinary skill, not to say quickness of invention and infinity of resource. What do we find? A wonderful stupidity of administration—a lack of resource, and a constant falling into the same foolish blunders time after time. They abound in exclamations of the intelligence of the German army, which they describe under some contemptible name that suggests deceit and trickery; and they themselves have a wonderful blindness, which seems like an epidemic, and suggests what in olden times people would describe as a possession of devils or a visitation of God. The number of times the French have been surprised in this war is beyond belief. It seems as if they were always surprised. On the morning of the 2nd of December, on the heights of Champigny, they were surprised as in the early dawn they were getting ready their soup. And see what happened at Ville Evrart on the night of the 21st. It is a little hamlet. Some of the Prussians, unable to get out of it fast enough in the morning when the French

took possession of it, hid themselves in cellars and out-of-the-way places. The French are in the most blessed ignorance of this, and have not the precaution to survey properly the hamlet they have seized. At midnight out come the Prussians, and create a fearful panic, in which they kill a French general, and do considerable damage besides. The Prussians pay for it in the end, but it is painful to think of the stupid confidence of the French, who are not so well supplied with officers that they can afford to lose any. It is doubtful whether a French general who can allow himself to be surprised in this way is of much value; still, people who pretend to know him speak of the death of General Blaise as a serious loss. But the blundering at Ville Evrart was more than matched by the blundering at Bourget. The Marines were sent to take with the bayonet this place, which the generals now find that they have to approach in trenches, with heavy guns. There were thus sacrificed to no purpose 300 Marines, who are undoubtedly the best fighting men in Paris. It is the constant error of the French generals in this war, that they send men to do the work of cannon-balls. Of the stupidities of the French Intendance I am tired of speaking. On the night of the 21st the soldiers at Bourget were thirty-six hours without bread or wine—all in the bitterest cold. Nothing can be worse than such management.

Paris, Dec. 26.—Worse and worse! The Centigrade thermometer is down to twelve degrees below zero, and there seems no prospect of an immediate change. I cannot help thinking of those good old days when, as the year drew to a close, the armies engaged in a campaign always went into winter quarters. When it is said that the race of mankind has degenerated, let us henceforth bear in mind, as a proof to the contrary, that we carry on war now-a-days irrespective of the seasons. Nor is this a trifle. There are seasons so inclement that most men feel they have enemy enough on their hands if they can bear up against the cold which numbs all energy and chills the most ardent courage. There have now been frozen to death at the outposts no less than fifty sentinels; there are more than 1,200 cases of severe frost-bite, many of them likely to prove fatal, in the military hospitals; and the Seine has begun to freeze. How can the fighting go on in such weather? Both sides are too glad to desist, but especially the enemy, whose game it is not to fight, but to wait for famine to do its work. The ground also is so hard, being frozen to the depth of twenty inches from the surface, that it is impossible to proceed with the earthworks, and all the troops have been withdrawn under shelter, except those which

are absolutely necessary to guard the advanced positions. We must wait for a rise in the temperature before hostilities can be resumed in more active fashion.

In this vexatious delay how bitterly must Trochu lament that he ever underrated the importance of Bourget; that he allowed the enemy to seize upon it; and that, when he attacked it on the morning of Wednesday last, he had no idea of the strength of the defences with which the Prussians in their seven weeks' occupation had surrounded it. He battered it with cannon on the north side, and then sent his Marines to take it with the bayonet, little thinking how powerfully it was defended with walls and earthworks, one behind another, which he has now to attack from the south. We are all waiting with anxiety to see the further development of the somewhat complicated series of operations commenced on the 21st. To the general sketch of these operations which I gave in my last two letters I have nothing important to add except this, that the French still hold the Ile de Chiard, and seem determined to hold it. This is a large ait in the Seine, between Chatou and Croissy, and if its occupation be as serious as it would seem, it indicates on the part of General Trochu a considerable confidence in his strength, and a desire to possess himself of the peninsula, which has its apex at Croissy, as he already possesses the peninsula which has its apex at Gennevilliers. That he will attempt to drive forward in all the three directions in which he is at present feeling his way, is not likely. I understand that he has withdrawn the troops from Ville Evrart; but still there are three distinct lines on which he threatens to drive forward—the first by the Maison Blanche to Chelles, the second by Drancy and Bourget to the north-east, the third by the peninsula of Croissy to the north-west; and we shall know ere long whether by one or another of these lines the General can find a weak place in the circumvallation of Paris. He has five good weeks before him, and there is no saying what he may not be able to do in that time, nor what—outside Paris—the provinces may not be able to achieve.

Five weeks—that is, up to the 1st of February. It is, of course, difficult to be precise in calculating how long famine can be resisted—so much depends on the temper of the people, on the possibilities of the weather, and on the mysterious working of disease, in addition to the simple question of food. Calculations differ, but it may safely be said that those who reckon the surrender of Paris as inevitable at a date earlier than the 1st of February, have all along taken a most desponding view of the Parisian power of resistance, and have ever since the

commencement of the siege been predicting a speedy catastrophe. A catastrophe is quite possible, but it has certainly not been speedy hitherto, nor is it likely to be as speedy as the despondent suppose, and as the enemy desires. It is certainly on the cards that, if ill-luck should haunt us in Paris, and if ill-tidings should reach us from without, a surrender may take place before the month of January can expire. But it is also on the cards, and from all that I have been able to glean I think it more probable, that with ordinary luck the resistance will be prolonged even beyond the 1st of February. This is not to say that the suffering of the people will not be excessive. It is excessive even now, and it is a constant wonder to me how they endure. But they have shown, hitherto, such powers of endurance—such a calm, proud, patient spirit, that we are bound to count upon it to the uttermost.

As for the sufferings of the people, consider the death-rate of the last two weeks—2,728, which figure, be it remembered, is independent of slaughter in the field. Typhoid fever is on the increase, and especially among the refugees from the suburbs, who are huddled together in rooms in great want and misery. I found an excuse a few weeks ago to visit some of these people, and managed as follows:—All over Paris you will see the usual yellow tickets hung out, announcing that apartments and floors are to be let. They are to be seen in great numbers, especially in the fashionable quarters—in numbers so great as to indicate a very large emigration from Paris, and an imminent fall in house-rent. I went to the *concierges* of several houses, and asked leave to see the apartments which were to be let. It was in the end of October, and the almost invariable answer was, “We have nothing to let till January.” I replied, “Very good, that will just suit me; let me see the rooms.” In these rooms were crowded together the poor families dispossessed of their homes in the suburbs. They came pouring into Paris, some with a few bits of furniture, others with little besides their clothes. Here a whole family got packed into one room; there a couple of families were heaped together in a stifling atmosphere—odorous of children, onions, garlic, and cat. These poor wretches, living in some of the best quarters of Paris in fearful discomfort, now crowd together more than ever to keep themselves warm, and they breed pestilence.

The cold also produces its victims more directly. Indeed, considering the length of time for which numbers of poor wretches have to stand in file before the provision shops, all in the coldest weather, it is a wonder that the victims are not more numerous. The deaths from bronchitis are this last week 172, those from pneumonia 147. There is plenty of warm clothing

to be had, but there is a lack of fuel. Coal there is none, except for the uses of the Government; and the supply of firewood is running so short, that it has been resolved to cut down the trees in the woods of Boulogne and Vincennes, and if need be in all the gardens about Paris, and on the Boulevards. Imagine Paris shorn of its trees. The destruction of trees about the capital, even up to the present time, is fearful to behold; what will it be in the next six weeks! I tremble as I think of the noble trees in the gardens of the Tuileries, in the Champs Elysées, in the gardens of the Elysée, and of the British Embassy. But what can the Government do? It is better that the trees should burn than that the people should perish for cold. Part of the fatality which has pursued the Parisians was this, that when the siege began, the firewood in store was about half the usual supply. The summer had been very dry; the Marne and the Seine had been unusually low, and the rafts of wood which are transported to Paris by the rivers could not be delivered in time. So it came to pass that Paris has been threatened with starvation from cold as well as with starvation from hunger.

For food, there is little else left but bread and horse. Now and then we make a haul of something rich and rare. We had three enormous salmon the other day in Paris—at least, they were called salmon; but I am not ichthyologist enough to say what they were. The fish were large, as large as the largest salmon, but mottled like trout, and the French name for them is *beccard*. A few days ago, in the same first-rate restaurant in which I saw the supposed salmon, I was offered lamb for dinner. The proprietor declared most solemnly it was innocent lamb. Whereupon, with a trust in human nature which is worthy of the Garden of Eden, I agreed to eat the innocent lamb. What do you think it was? It was the opposite of lamb—it was wolf. We are thus in Paris every day going through a history which is like one of Pilpay's fables reversed. There were three rogues in Pilpay who made a Brahmin believe, by the force of assertion, that his sheep was an unclean dog. And here there are scores of restaurant keepers who make you believe that dog is sheep, and wolf is lamb, and horse is beef, and ass is veal. Whatever it is, the food is not good, and it is scarce. But if those who go to a first-rate restaurant, and eat it under the most favourable conditions (these, however, being very costly), find themselves badly off, what shall we say of the poor who have little besides bread to feed on, and who are deprived of the condiments by which their small dole of tough horse can be made palatable, or the treasure trove of a fat rat can be made digestible? The different

mayoralties of Paris have compared notes, and have prepared lists of those in each district who are necessitous. They amount to very nearly 500,000 inhabitants, that is, a quarter of the population. The lists, however, do not include myriads of tradesmen's families and hard-working members of professions who are ashamed to throw themselves on public charity, and who starve in secret. With all this, there is not a murmur to be heard. The people submit to their hard fare, to cold and hunger, and long dark nights void of amusement, with a cheerfulness which is sublime. There is no deception in this. They complain quickly enough about many things. They criticise the Government fearlessly, denouncing its mistakes and blunders. But they make no complaints about their miseries, and accept them with an unpretending fortitude which no people in the world could surpass. No murmurs, and very little crime. The chief crime is drunkenness. It must be confessed that one can now see in the streets of Paris—hitherto the most sober capital in Christendom—the unwonted spectacle of intoxication. The anxieties of the siege, the want of amusement, and the badness of the food, all lead a number of people to seek for support in strong drink. What stuff it is they drink! Wine is not enough for them, and they take to spirits. The spirit which they adore is rum. They buy it at two francs a bottle, and make it into punch. The National Guards especially are great in punch. One battalion invites another to what they call “a punch,” and when the war-companies of a battalion are ordered out of Paris to the advanced posts, the comrades who remain behind treat them to what they call the “punch of adieu.” I am not going to defend drunkenness, either in ordinary mortals or in National Guards. There have been some gross cases of drunkenness in the National Guards, of which one cannot speak too contemptuously; but do not let us make too much of the crime; and, above all, let us make every allowance for the temptation to it. There is not half the drunkenness in Paris that there is in London, and it is marked here because it is so unwonted. If the London populace were in the condition of the Parisian populace—reduced to such straits—let us try to imagine how they would behave, and especially how they would soak themselves in beer and gin.

Christmas-tide was not disturbed by sorties, as the besiegers had apprehended, and outside Paris, at least, the festival was observed in a truly German manner. On Christmas Eve the Special Correspondent at Versailles, dating on that occasion from Villeneuve St. Georges, wrote:—

Birnam wood has come to Dunsinane in the shape of the ornamented trees which the besiegers of Paris have prepared for Christmas time. We have not had a great sortie to the south-eastward to enliven the frost-bound banks of the Seine, though a sortie has seemed very probable from day to day, and this trip, in the biting December weather, has not shown me much that was new. But before returning to head-quarters, I will lead you through a half-ruined village, where high revel is being held among the lads who wait for Trochu's coming. The captain of the company in charge of the village is entertaining his men with a feast of rough though hearty cheer. There is a tree lighted up with many odds and ends of candle, and there is a small barrel of beer, and there are several cakes made with almond crust. Some presents, too, are laid under the tree—a tobacco pouch and a pipe, a few knives, and other small matters—which seem greatly to please the men who are rewarded with them. I do not think that there are presents for all. But all can gaze on the tree, and all have a pull at the contents of the small barrel. Strong, jovial fellows, in greatcoats, with collars turned up, and with icicles melting from their beards, come crowding into the room—some absent and unknown Frenchman's parlour—and draw themselves up respectfully into the group before the good-natured captain. He speaks to them of his being glad to see them there, and says that the beer, though not out-and-out Bavarian, will smack of home. And the men receive the remark with evident pleasure. They must be thinking much of home to-night, and of all the Christmas gatherings in Germany, which are made less glad than usual by the absence of so many soldiers and so many Landwehr battalions. Remember, as you watch this cheery scene, that we are near the great hungry city. These brave lads are banished from the Fatherland for awhile, and yonder French sentinels who guard the approaches to Paris are having but a dreary Christmas, even if they escape a bullet through the head before the end of the week. We see the jollity round the improvised German tree, and we think of the starving millions who shiver in the city. It is a great time race—a mighty effort between the hostile nations. The French obstinacy in holding to their frontier of 1792 is equalled by the invaders' resolve to have that frontier changed. If we turn back from the village of the Christmas party towards the bridge at Villeneuve St. Georges, we see waggon trains passing ceaselessly on to supply the troops before Paris. Supplies of men are wanted, too, as well as supplies of food.

Dec. 25, Morning.—I hear from an intelligent young soldier, who has just travelled up to the front, that all the strength of

Germany is gathering against France. The struggle is seen to be very serious, in spite of what has passed. A captured Emperor, a captured army, ruin, invasion, and political change, have left the French still able to fight. They "come up to time" after each knock-down with surprising alacrity; and though the chances are in favour of Germany, the German people must not be disappointed at one, or two, or three months of delay. Such a work as the destruction of France requires patience. What if they resist after Paris has fallen? What if Trochu, to begin with, should push his defence to the point of starvation, and not surrender until February is well advanced? The best of the German leaders have seen that no chance must be neglected, and fresh forces are being called up, and the King himself has spoken boldly of the delay which may occur. When the whole of the Landwehr is in readiness, as it soon will be, and the strong places in rear of the army are garrisoned by this formidable militia, there will be such a force for active operations as will tax every effort of M. Gambetta to confront. The new levies in France fight as well as the old and vanquished army, or, at least, they seem to stand their ground with as much effect. But the wear and tear to the country of having such men shot down will become almost insupportable.

It has been my fortune to see many of the recent prisoners, officers of the Garde Mobile, and officers come back from honourable retirement to serve the cause in extremity. I have found the same obstinate spirit in most of them. They own that they are worsted, but stick to the "national idea" with a faith in France that cannot be denied. They will not believe that the frontier is to be changed; and here is the difficulty of the solution—the sore point of the whole matter to Frenchmen. "If we do give it up," they say, "we will try for it again."

It was on the east and north-east sides of the circle of investment, where the fighting had been hardest and most frequent, that the Germans celebrated Christmas with most joviality. From Margency the Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote on Christmas morning:—

"Where shall we dine?" I know where I should like to dine; but the obstinate Parisians come between one and "the old folks at home," and the young ones as well. I need not complain of want of Christmas invitations; it is in their very number that the bewilderment lies. With the fear of being assailed as a Jenkins before my eyes, of being cynically accused of flunkeyism, I refrain from an allusion to the nature of one invitation. Then there is that kindly one from compatriots in

Versailles. Good old Dr. Tegener, of the Ecouen Hospital, has sent round another with a postscript to the note in the shape of the single word "Punch." Some merry lads in Epinay wish me to go down there, and be jovial under the shadow of La Briche; a battery of artillery would be glad of my company—at least they say so—at Napoléon-St.-Leu; a battalion of Württembergers in Champs half booked me more than a fortnight ago; and the list ends with the genial and cordial invitation of good Major von Schönberg, and his officers of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Saxon Regiment. To-night is the battalion's turn for duty on certain far outlying foreposts, the locality of which I need not particularize. The officers are right hearty fellows. Then there is Frau Majorin's Bavarian beer (per *Feldpost*). Yes, I say done and done again with the Major. It is a long ride, with the temperature, too, below freezing point, and things over on the French side are not altogether tranquil; but the way I am going will bring me to the right spot, if that sluggish firing from the forts should warm up and cover a sortie, and there is something in all likelihood to be got by a gossip at the officers' casino in Gonesse.

Gonesse, Dec. 25, Afternoon.—In stating, in the hurried notes which I sent you on the afternoon of the 21st, that Le Bourget was actually taken by the French, I was quite right—proceeding on the evidence of my own senses, although at a later hour periphrastic phrases were resorted to, calculated to convey the idea that it was only a partial and temporary occupation. On the contrary, the recapture on the same night was only partial, the French holding part of Le Bourget during the night, although they withdrew without fighting in the morning. In the first rush of the French on Le Bourget, on the 21st, when they came on with daring and rapidity, about sixty men and, I have heard, one officer of the Queen Elizabeth's Regiment were taken prisoners. Among the number was an ambulance assistant, whom the French sent back the next day, in terms of the Geneva Convention, and he has just given me some interesting details of what he saw during his brief captivity. The prisoners were taken into St. Denis, and temporarily placed in a house with sentries over them. They were treated with the greatest humanity, amply supplied with coffee, sugar, wine, and bread. There was also given them abundance of flesh, but it was candidly owned that the meat was horseflesh. The French officers came among the Prussian prisoners, and asked them with great solicitude whether they had any cigars. An exchange was effected, the Germans giving cigars for cognac, of which there seemed to be great plenty. A party of St. Denis ladies, dressed with the utmost elegance, came also to see the

prisoners, and bound also, besides the gratification of their curiosity, on an acquisitive errand. "Had Messieurs les Prussiens any bacon in their knapsacks?" If so, the ladies would be glad to buy it of them. Only two fellows had any, and they gallantly made a present of it to the fair inquirers, who became very complimentary then as to the personal appearance of the captives. "What great, huge, fine men these Prussians are, to be sure," remarked one lady. "Yes, and just compare them with our little morsels of fellows," added another, pointing to the five feet nothing sentry who was on duty over the stalwart guardsmen. Not unnaturally, as I think, the "little morsel" in question felt aggrieved at this observation, and his irritation took the form of turning the ladies out. My informant saw nothing of any privations during his sojourn in St. Denis; but then he was there only for a few hours, and owns his opportunities were not great.

What fearful damage one of those huge shells from the fort guns is capable of doing when it falls and explodes in a close mass of men was illustrated yesterday by a terrible catastrophe. A single shell, which burst behind one of the parallels at Pont Iblon, killed and wounded fourteen men of the 1st Guard Regiment. I have not been able to learn the proportion which the killed and wounded bear to each other; but fourteen fighting men have undoubtedly been rendered *hors de combat* by the explosion of a single shell.

In the officers' casino there is sitting a dragoon officer who has come hither on an errand worth mentioning in England. His men, quartered in a village a considerable distance to the rear, have heard that there is in Gonesse a colporteur of the English Bible Society with his waggon, and they have asked the officer to come and ask the colporteur either to visit or to part with a few parcels of his tracts. I forgot to mention at the time, that on the road between Gonesse and Aulnay, on the morning of the 23rd—a road which two hours after was a very *via dolorosa* of exploding shells—I met this same colporteur coolly jogging forward with intent to distribute his wares among the battalions standing on the slope there waiting for the battle to commence. "It was a good time," according to the expressed views of this simple, brave, Christian man, "for the men to read good words when they were standing there with nothing to do, and with the shadow of death hanging over them." There are few who will disagree with him, but there are not many who would proceed so practically to give effect to the conviction. I regret much that I have lost the card on which I wrote the name of this brave colporteur, but he came from Carlsruhe, he told me.

Here is a story of valour of another kind, but not of a higher character. In the 1st Battalion of the Queen Elizabeths there is a boy-lieutenant, with a swarthy face, and bright black eyes, whose name is Von Schramm. He cannot be more than seventeen—were he an English lad, he would be at Eton. A German lad, he has done with the schools, passed his examinations, got his commission, won the Iron Cross, and is the Adjutant of his battalion. When Major von Altrock (Le Bourget, if it has made bullet-holes in his mantle, has brought him, too, a step in rank)—when Major von Altrock led his battalion into Le Bourget, on the 20th, little Von Schramm was left behind sick in Aulnay. The guns of the 21st knocked the sickness out of him; his regiment was fighting, and he not there. He jumped on his horse, crossed the inundation at Le Blanc Mesnil, and rode into Le Bourget athwart the artillery fire from Drancy. The Queen Elizabeths, however, were already all but driven out, and he, striking the village street half way up, found himself in the crowd of the Frenchmen. To leap from his horse and dash into a house was the work of an instant—if he could get out at the back door he might yet escape. But there was no back door—the pursuers were hot on his heels, and Von Schramm was a prisoner. His captors asked him for his parole, but he refused to give it, and they proceeded to conduct him towards St. Denis—a convoy of two officers and two men. In going through the park of Le Bourget—a beautiful spot, in which there is a lake and many *bosquets*—the musketry fire from the retreating guardsmen came very close and fast. The officer who carried Von Schramm's sword was shot, and fell. Von Schramm made a dash at his own sword, got his hand inside the hilt, cut down the other officer, took to the water like a duck, dodged the bullets of the soldiers as he swam across, and finally joined his regiment after all—rather damp it is true, as a man will be who takes to swimming with his clothes on, but extremely jolly. And the best of it was that the ducking cured his sickness; he is as well as ever he was. At least one is entitled, I think, to say so after having seen him demolish a massive dinner and two bottles of beer.

Clichy, December 26.—It is a long weary stretch from Gonesse to Aulnay. There is no intervening village, and not a single house by the wayside. There used to be two straw stacks, but they have been burnt down by French shells. I have seen during this campaign not a little of the visible effect of close shell-fire, but I never have seen anything to equal the frequency of the vestiges left on this track by the almost continuous bombardment of the last three days. In one small plot behind

a battery *emplacement* I counted twenty-one shell-holes, yet the solid earthworks were wonderfully little dilapidated. If they had been of stone, they must simply have been knocked to pieces; and nobody who has seen shells exploding among stone works requires to be told how the splinters of iron become multiplied over and over again by the splinters of stone. It was a curious proof of that masterly consciousness of ability to concentrate, and absence of fussy demonstration on the part of the Germans, that not a single soldier nor a single gun was visible on this expanse on which the day before there stood an army. The men were in the villages on the alert, it is true, and ready for action at a moment's notice, but they were not needlessly brought from under cover.

I arrive at the château, and put up my horse there, going out in advance to the foreposts before the day fades. As I reach the garden opening into the forest, a discouraging sight meets the eye. Four soldiers are carrying on their shoulders a motionless form, lying on a stretcher, and covered with a bloody blanket. "Wounded?" The solemn "Dead" comes from the mouth of the accompanying under-officer. It is a corpse they are carrying up into the village. This was Private Jeskow's last Christmas morning. He was making his coffee in a house behind Outpost No. 8, when a shell burst under the window. His sergeant told him he was in dangerous quarters, but the coffee was near the boil. Before it boiled, another shell had come and burst in the room; a fragment struck Jeskow in the back, and killed him.

Forward down a slope through a solitary wood of dense under-wood mingled with goodly trees. On the pathway are numerous craters of shells. There is a little rise, and then I emerge on to a belt of heathy clearing in the wood. Everywhere the wood has been full of barricades, of *chevaux de frise*, of all kinds of appliances for arresting an enemy. On this cleared belt are works of greater pretensions—parallels, entrenchments, strong stockades, trenches, enfiladed approaches, and what not. A few soldiers are visible about it. There are more among the huts to the right. What a glorious sky is that which lies over the faint gossamer-like smoke of Paris! The sun is going down, not in human blood this Christmas afternoon, but in bloodlike hues of his own creation. All the firmament is rippled in crimson wavelets, and the light comes ruddy on the earth as if it fell through stained glass windows. Five minutes bring one across the clearing into more scrub, and then into a village of châteaux nestling in the scrub. Forest, clearance, and village all remind me very much of the neighbourhood of Chislehurst in Kent. There is the same ruggedness, and still

the same appearance of vicinity to the metropolis in the physical aspect of the scene. On the cross-roads in the centre of this collection of villages I meet the officers in command of the two battalions waiting to be relieved. The men are massed behind the walls. They are sauntering up and down on the exposed road. Any news? None. Perhaps a little. At ten o'clock this morning two French brigades deployed in parade order before Bondy in two long lines. Then it seemed as if the troops marched past a general and formed hollow square, in which they stood for nearly an hour, after which one brigade went back to quarters, while the other marched on to the foreposts. It was conjectured that a religious service was being performed while the troops stood there in hollow square. If so du Nord and de l'Est furnished the responses, for they were firing at that hour. About the same hour three brigades were visible marching in the front of Aubervilliers, and the Observatory officer reported that he had seen two naval batteries arrive by train at Bondy, and immediately push forward, as if to take up position. This would seem to argue that there are to be heavy batteries so near us as Bondy, which must, in the event of their not being silenced, have the inevitable result of widening the circle of our forepost environment.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, here comes the 103rd. There is the Major in front talking earnestly with the field-officer he is going to relieve. Here comes Hammerstein, unrecognizable by reason of wraps, and only to be discerned and greeted by his voice. He has got on a pair of fur boots, that seem a legacy from an Esquimaux, and here is his big brother-in-law, Kirchbach, and Von Zanthier, and the whole lot of them. Now comes the relieving of the foreposts—a ticklish duty, for the relief must be in full possession before the relieved dare to come out. As each company goes on to its post, it is met by a trusty non-commissioned officer of the departing outpost, who acts as its cicerone. Then the sergeant and the lieutenant go out and change the sentries, and, with a cheery “Good night,” off stumps the “old guard.” Glad enough to go, beyond doubt. The duty here just now is one night on, one night off; but when, as has occurred for the last three days, the day and night “off” are spent standing on the alert, there is not much relaxation. Two battalions, instead of one, are now detailed for the outposts, owing to circumstances to which I am not at present at liberty to allude; and this makes the duty all the harder. The relieving duty over, we reach our home for the night out beyond the villas. Let me describe it. It is a long, low wooden hut, such as you may see squatters and gipsies occupying on the debatable ground between Peckham, Lewisham, and Nun-

head Cemetery. Its loftiest part is about six feet high, the roof sloping till, at the back, the height is about four feet. The erection is wholly of wood—chiefly, as it appears, of château doors. There is one window in the place; it is sashed, and tastefully curtained. There is a wooden floor. One—the lower roofed side of the room—is lined with spring mattresses, that have evidently also come out of the châteaux. On the walls are pictures—ay, and mirrors—to be ascribed to the same origin; and between the window and the beds is a range of good massive mahogany tables, that were not made by the pioneers. The chairs are a study. They are here of all styles. The fauteuil, the ottoman, the American rocking chair, the high straight-backed Elizabethan, the Louis Quatorze settee, and the humble wicker-bottom. There is a pleasant fire burning in the little stove, and you cannot well imagine how cheerful, with the bright lamp burning and the sparkle of the fire, the little nest looked—if you could only forget that the French were not 1,000 yards off, and that you were in such ludicrously easy range of their guns.

But we did forget these facts somehow. The quarters were those of a *Hauptmann*, he in whose charge was the uttermost forepost. But by common consent the officers from the other positions farther back—the *repli*, where the Major has his post—and the captains from the right and left rear came dropping in to eat their Christmas dinner with the English guest and comrade. The kitchen was a part of the hut partitioned off, and we had the battalion cook there—a resplendent being in a white cap and apron. Before dinner he entered in state and lit the candles on the Christmas-tree, a goodly sprout, from every bough of which dangled cakes and comfits. The cloth—we had a cloth, never mind about its colour—was laid, the plates and wine were warmed, and we drew around the social board. I am in a position to present you with the Christmas *menu* of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Regiment on the foreposts:—Soup—Liebig's extract. Fish—Sardines, caviare. Entrées—Goose sausage, ham sausage, a variety of undistinguishable sausage. *Pièces de résistance*—Boiled beef and macaroni, roast mutton and potato salad. Divertissement—*Schinken*, compote of pears, ditto of apples, preserved sour-kROUT. Cheese, fresh butter, fruit, nuts, biscuits, tarts, &c. The potables were as follows:—One barrel of Frau Majorin's beer still to the good, the other a "dead marine;" very good red wine. Champagne iced—a little too much in fact. The caterer had stuck the bottles outside on his first arrival, and it seemed as if the wine had frozen in a solid mass. When it came to be poured out, it would not run. A proposition

was made that the bottles should be broken, a hatchet fetched, and a portion of Champagne ice be served out to each person; but an officer of an inquiring turn of mind, who had been pricking the ice on the surface of one bottle with a skewer, found that it was only about half an inch thick, and that below there lay a limpid pint of liquid champagne. We pricked all the bottles with the skewer, and got on beautifully.

After dinner there were two toasts. One was "The King of Saxony;" the other, "Frau Majorin von Schönberg." Both were drunk with enthusiasm; the latter—in her beer—with positive effusion. Then we got to song-singing. A young officer came to the front in this line—the young Baron von Zehman. Instrumental accompaniments were forbidden on account of the proximity of the enemy, but the choruses were loud enough to raise the dead, let alone the Frenchmen. Among the songs were:—

"Stehe ich in finsterer Mitternacht,"
(Standing in the dark midnight,)
 "Wer will unter die Soldaten?"
(Who 'll be a soldier?)

The beautiful and plaintive—

"Ich hatte einen Kamaraden,
Einen besseren findest du nicht."
(I had a comrade,
A better one ne'er you 'd find.)

I seem to have a hazy notion that somebody tried "Bonnie Dundee," and failed ignominiously.

About ten o'clock a deserter was brought in—a decidedly unfavourable specimen of the French Line. He was dirty, and he had no buttons anywhere—rather a common want I have noticed with French soldiers. He said he was hungry and thirsty. The Major gave him something to eat and the run of a bottle of brandy, while we listened to the rascal's lies. When he had finished his rigmarole, which consisted of all sorts of canards, it was too late discovered that he was as drunk as David's sow. He insisted on singing the "Marseillaise," and when that was done, roared "*A bas les Prussiens!*" What was to be done with the wretch? If he were turned out of doors he would go to sleep in the ditch, and freeze so hard before morning that you could chip pieces off him. Ultimately he was relegated to the stable by the *repli*, where stood the battalion horses, and was borne away, shoulder high, roaring "*Vive la République!*" a little

Enter Under-officer Schultz, wooden as ever—e woodener,

perhaps, on account of the hard frost. Under-officer Schultz came to read the orders. Ordinarily he would have read them dry and gone away dry; but this was Christmas-time, and kindness prompted the wetting of Under-officer Schultz's throat. "Champagne, red wine, or cognac, Schultz?"—"Cognac, Herr Hauptmann," comes woodenly from the lips of Schultz. Schultz bolted a big glass of cognac, and then read the orders. I think the cognac gave him unction to roll out sonorously the sentences of King William's address to his troops, which was on order for last night. Then he went about with a wooden click of his heels, and disappeared.

There was a continual circulation of officers as we sat by the board in the wooden house. The Major and myself were the only sedentaries. Duty called, and the men obeyed it. About midnight Von Zanthier rose and buckled on his sword. He was going round with the patrol; would I go with him? Certainly. There were the officer, three men, and myself. Out we went into the brushwood beyond any of our posts. There were the French outposts, not 500 yards off. We could see the fires lit by the sentries. Could a neutral go across and have a chat with them? Well, not exactly; there were two or three obstacles. Here is a noise in the brushwood; somebody is coming down the path; there are three men. A voice says, "*Venez, messieurs!*" It is a French patrol, and the officer thinks our patrol is French too. Von Zanthier and his men accept the invitation. I stand fast. Presently he comes back with three prisoners—a Mobile officer and two men. The officer is a thorough gentleman. On our way back to the *feldwache* he has an immense deal to say, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. When we get back we find that that wonderful man in the white cap has made egg-flip for us. The Mobile officer joins us heartily in a caulker, and does not need to be pressed to take a little supper. He is a jewel of a man. He tells me he once had a moor in Scotland. He laughs at the notion of Paris capitulating. The Mobiles alone are capable of averting that fate. They certainly are not very brilliant specimens, the two he has met with; but then, as he says, "they were selected promiscuously." More egg-flip, and then the spring mattresses.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHILE the Germans before Paris were enjoying their *Liebesgaben* with wine and song, their comrades of the 8th Army Corps were very differently occupied. General Faidherbe had advanced

upon Amiens and challenged General Manteuffel from a strong position which he had taken up on the Hallu, having its centre at Pont-Noyelles. French accounts represent that Faidherbe had with him four divisions, numbering together 35,000 men; German accounts give Von Göben, who commanded the Germans, 30,000; but all the German writers affirm that Faidherbe's numerical strength was twice that of their own army. The battle was fought on the 23rd of December, in the severest weather of an extremely hard winter. The French, by the admission of their adversaries, fought well, and, although the Germans took seven villages in their front, Faidherbe held his position when night fell. The Correspondent with Von Göben wrote from Querrieux, on the evening of December 23:—

After the first battle of Amiens, which took place on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of November, and which resulted in the destruction of what was then called the "Army of the North," the remnants of the latter were said to have fled in the direction of Caen. General Manteuffel resolved at once to pursue them, and consequently marched on Rouen, which was taken without any resistance, and to Pont-Audemer, having a small but interesting engagement near Forges, where about 300 prisoners were captured. Learning, however, that the bulk of the dispersed army had gone towards Arras and Lille, the commander-in-chief altered his course, turning back to Rouen, where he received intelligence that a new Army of the North had been formed, well equipped, in possession of excellent naval guns, and well served by experienced mariners. This army was said to have taken up a position to the north of Amiens, expecting the approach of the Prussians. In order to meet the enemy we left Château Blangy-Trouville this morning as early as five o'clock. It was extremely cold, and the wind blew fiercely. When day broke 30,000 men, with a powerful artillery, were advancing from all quarters to a huge plain near the village from which I am writing this letter. The place is bordered by a narrow but long line of wood, which is separated by a small river from a hill extending from Querrieux to Bussy, about three miles in length. Along this hill the French army was posted, with its batteries, consisting of over seventy heavy guns, ready for action. On the Prussian side the 15th Division, under command of General von Kummer, was ordered to advance and give battle, whilst the 16th Division was to move on the enemy's right wing, and so encircle him as to leave him no other choice than a retreat on the River Somme, which would have been fatal. The 15th and 16th Divisions, it

must be remembered, form the 1st Army Corps, commanded by General von Göben, whom the Germans regard as the Moltke of the future.

On the plain mentioned above, orders were given with as much minuteness and regularity as at a mere drill on the Mühlheimer Heide, near Cologne. When all was arranged the army began to move, and after about an hour's marching the advanced guard was near enough to the enemy to exchange the first shots. But soon afterwards our artillery opened their fire, which was responded to by the French in the most regular and constant manner. They aimed wonderfully well, and not only did they damage materially the Prussian artillery, but even silenced one of our batteries.

Whilst cannonading was going on on our right wing, the infantry had taken the villages of Querrieux and Pont-Noyelles by storm. It was a most arduous struggle, and the Prussian and French dead and wounded covered the ground. Thus far all went well for the Prussians during the whole day, until darkness set in, and we were expecting the French to retire. But all at once a fire was reopened against us from the hill, which might be compared for severity with that at Gravelotte. Darkness had begun to set in, and the spectacle was indescribably grand. To this fire we responded but feebly, for our men had expended their ammunition. The French, noticing this, came down the hill, and made a successful attack on Querrieux. The 33rd Regiment began to retreat, the French shells constantly bursting amidst them, when the Fusilier Battalion of the 65th Regiment, under the command of Major von Bastineller, came and checked the further advance of the French. Twice the latter attempted to retake the village, and twice they were repulsed by the same battalion. It was a hand-to-hand fight. Not a shot was fired. Nothing was used but the bayonet or the sword. After the second repulse, the 65th Regiment, commanded by Colonel Baron von Dornberg, remained ultimately in possession of the village, which was burning in three or four different places, the flames throwing their light far and wide over the surrounding country, and showing nothing but troops, and hundreds of vehicles of all kinds, which were sent from Amiens in order to convey the wounded to the hospital established in the spacious rooms of the Museum. Thither I hastened late in the day. The highway from Querrieux to Amiens, about twelve English miles, was literally covered with waggons, carriages, carts, and all kinds of vehicles crowded with poor fellows whose limbs had been crippled or mutilated. And when I arrived at the hospital, which is

capable of accommodating several hundred patients, it was already overcrowded to such a degree that large numbers of unhappy fellows had to remain in the passages while the surgeons were busy applying the first bandages, and affording relief to the burning wounds. It was a terrible scene of misery and suffering.

The result of this day's fighting seems to be a gain to neither party, except that we hold possession of the villages occupied yesterday by the enemy, and that a large number of prisoners are in our hands.

The battle will be continued to-morrow, and were it to end in a French victory, its result, as bearing upon the ultimate issue of the present war, would be of no material importance. The officers with whom I have spoken on the subject, when they were brought in as prisoners, are all aware of this. However it may end, in justice to the recently formed French army it must be said, that the soldiers of the Republic fight infinitely better than those of the Empire.

On the 24th Von Göben awaited the arrival of reinforcements which General Manteuffel had ordered, and General von Senden was advancing from St. Quentin, in the direction of Corbie, with a division, and Prince Albrecht from Paris, with the cavalry of the Guard. As the French were so superior in numbers, and were strong in artillery, it had been supposed that General Faidherbe would attack; but the two armies stood gazing at one another for a whole day, and on Christmas Day the French retired in the direction of Arras. It appeared afterwards that their commander could not depend on his commissariat, the experience of six months of warfare not having sufficed to teach the military administration of France the importance of a service to the inefficiency of which they owed some of the earliest defeats of the campaign. Perhaps there were also other reasons why General Faidherbe never in his brief career followed up an advantage, but conducted his campaign on the principle of "limited liability."

The Correspondent with Von Göben wrote on the 24th:—

Pont-Noyelles, Dec. 24.—General von Manteuffel did not return to-night to Amiens, but remained with his staff at Querrieux; and in a light in which you could just distinguish a soldier from a tree, cannonading was heard again on the right wing of the French army. To-day the 16th Division, under the command of General von Barnekow, was in front, whilst the 15th Division formed the reserve, having the same position as yesterday; the left wing at Querrieux extending along the wood in front of the enemy down to Bussy and Daours.

The roaring of the cannon was intermingled with the discharge of rifles, but all the shooting came from the French, and nothing or very little was heard from the 16th Division. The explanation was given about four o'clock in the afternoon. The French having early enough seen our movements, were at once impressed with the danger of their position, and with their utter peril if the Germans should succeed in completing their tactics. It would have been nothing but a repetition of the manœuvre at Sedan. They peopled, therefore, the top of the hill with soldiers, and feigned an intention to continue the battle. For that purpose they discharged cannons and rifles, galloped to and fro along the line, and showed themselves exceedingly busy. But in the rear, behind the hill, a different movement was going on, consisting in conveying men, horses, and cannons to the railway train. This completed, the dummies on the top of the hill suddenly disappeared. When the 16th Division had completed their arrangements they found the cage empty—the bird had flown. The French had retreated to Arras and Lille. What a terrible sight was the battle-field! Hundreds of the French killed were left on the spot; here knapsacks, there ammunition, rifles, tents, uniforms—a horrible medley. It was then only we could see how hard the struggle must have been yesterday about the villages of Pont-Noyelles and Querrieux.

Wherever there was a stone, a tree, or anything affording protection, there were signs of fighting—a helmet, a kepi, a broken rifle. The cemetery was full of corpses, the sheds and hovels turned into cemeteries. Poor fellows! I do not know whether in consequence of the agonies they suffered, or from some other cause, but it is a fact that nearly all of them had their hands raised above their heads, as if praying to the Almighty—perhaps to shorten their sufferings. The Christmas of 1870 will indeed be a day of sorrow and tears in hundreds and thousands of hitherto happy families.

Albert, Dec. 25.—From the date of this note you will perceive that we are pursuing the enemy in the direction of Arras and Lille. It seems intended this time not to let him loose until he surrenders or is dispersed. Though the task of the First Army is fulfilled in keeping him off Paris, General von Manteuffel is, apparently, not satisfied with that alone. The German soldiers are in excellent spirits, in spite of the great cold which prevails this year in the north of France. Our provisions seem inexhaustible, and, above all, the state of the men's health is really excellent. The inhabitants behave well, and wherever we are expected food is prepared in advance, so that a few minutes after their arrival our men are at the

table busy with knife and fork. Give him enough to eat and drink, and the German soldier, as a rule, is a good-hearted fellow.

Rocquigny (near Arras), Dec. 27.—The results of the battle on the 23rd and 24th instant, of which I sent you an account, become clearer than they were when I wrote first. An account by General Faidherbe, the commander of the Army of the North, is published in *Le Pas de Calais*. It is as follows:—

“Yesterday we were engaged in a battle before Corbie, the line extending over six kilomètres, the right wing being at Contay, the centre at Pont-Noyelles and Querrieux on the small river l’Hallu, the left wing at Daours. The battle lasted from eleven in the morning until six o’clock in the evening, the chances of success having no decided character, when one of our batteries became dismounted and a battalion of our Mobiles began to retreat. Under such circumstances, it was due to the efforts of our Marines that our line of defence has been maintained. The *élan* was admirable. After a charge with the bayonet one company, comprising 150 Marines, threw themselves on Pont-Noyelles, in order to take the village from the Prussians; forced, however, by a terrible fusilade of the latter, they retired with a loss of thirteen men. The Prussians did not gain any ground, and our men have slept on our original positions in spite of the cold weather during the night. On our left wing Daours has been occupied by the enemy. The French have demolished two bridges—the one over the Somme, and the other a railway bridge. The general staff has been transferred this morning to the head-quarters at La Houssoye, which is in the centre of the action. At eleven in the morning our troops stood ‘en ligne.’ Our losses of yesterday have been estimated at about 250 killed and 800 wounded; those of the Prussians must have been considerably larger.”

Thus far the account of General Faidherbe I consider as close to the truth as possible; but it was written before the General had noticed the movement of our 16th Brigade, in consequence of which he had considered the retreat the wiser plan to be adopted. Thus the victory must be ascribed to the Prussians.

Von Göben followed Faidherbe with only one of his divisions the 15th, with which he had fought at Pont-Noyelles—and with the younger Prince Albrecht’s flying column, of about the strength of a brigade, to Bapaume, sending the 16th Division to invest Péronne, and keep the communications—a disposition of his forces which could only be justified by the event, and which could not fail to tempt the French commander to attack

him before he could concentrate his forces. Faidherbe, who, after the battle of Pont-Noyelles, had retired to the triangle protected by Lille, Arras, and Cambrai, when Von Göben proceeded to Bapaume, advanced cautiously, on the 30th, from Vitry, direct upon his position. On the 2nd his advanced guard attacked the Prussian post before Bapaume, but, owing to the failure of a subordinate general, without serious effect. On the 3rd a well-planned attack was made upon the villages before Bapaume, which the Germans, after hard fighting, were compelled to yield, but Faidherbe paused before the town itself. His own account of the matter was, that he had again run short of provisions and ammunition, and this, although he was only a few miles in front of a fortress. Göben held Bapaume, and Faidherbe retired, each claiming the victory, and each greatly exaggerating whatever advantage belonged to him. Péronne capitulated, Faidherbe not having ventured to advance to its relief. The Correspondent with Von Göben wrote, on the 4th of January, from Bapaume:—

General Faidherbe is not only a very brave but likewise a very industrious soldier; and whatever may ultimately be the fate of his army, no one will ever deny that he has given more trouble to the Prussians during the last few days than any Imperial general ever did. After the attack of the 15th Division on the North Army on the 23rd and 24th of December, I did not expect to have so soon to record a battle; yet a severe one took place yesterday in the neighbouring villages, and in the suburbs of this little town. The French were the aggressors, and the speed with which a battle was delivered, after the heavy losses in the battle near Amiens, may be the consequence of a request of General Trochu.

General Faidherbe was resolved to rescue Péronne, which is now undergoing a very heavy bombardment. Attacking part of the 16th Division in the north of Bapaume, he inflicted heavy losses on the 28th and 68th Regiments of Infantry. A battle, however, being expected yesterday morning, the 15th Division had likewise been ordered to take up position near Bapaume, together with Prince Albrecht's detachment, making up the total number of our army to about 16,000 men. The 65th Infantry Regiment having been ordered to hold the town, which commands the high road from Arras to Péronne, the rest of the army moved, at about six o'clock in the morning, towards Sapignies and Favreuil, where the enemy's army had its right wing. After an hour's marching the fire was first opened by our 33rd Regiment, promptly replied to by French infantry as well as by artillery. It is as well to mention here

at once, that the French attempts to bring heavy pieces on the battle-field have proved a perfect success, and if you peruse the records of losses after each battle, you will find the contingent of the Prussian artillery very great. Thus, one of our batteries lost yesterday two officers, twenty-five men, and thirty-six horses.

The French Army of the North, being in possession of excellent cannon, must likewise be acknowledged to know how to make the best use of them. From commanders in the artillery, who have been in nearly all the battles from the commencement of the present war, I have heard encomiums lavished on the artillery of the Republic, as being so superior to that of the Empire that comparison would be an offence to the former. The same may be said of the Republican soldiers, but they share with the soldiers of the Empire the misfortune of being without skilled leaders. Nevertheless, I must repeat what I said on a previous occasion, that considering the bulk of the Army of the North as recruits, the sailors only excepted, they have behaved well, executing several charges with the bayonet against old well-trained Prussian warriors. This they did with a courage and gallantry which does them great credit. Poor fellows! During one of those charges one battalion had to pass battalions of Prussians hidden at about five yards' distance. A full charge was given from the needle-guns with a result so terrible, that it will remain impressed on my mind during the rest of my life. I doubt whether fifty men of that battalion remained alive or unwounded. What a minute before was a body of French soldiers, burning with patriotism, was now a heap of misery and woe. Never have I witnessed such carnage as was the case here, and it cannot be wondered at that the few who remained unhurt took to flight as quickly as they could. In other instances the French were not less merciless to our regiments. Thus, when storming a village held by our 33rd Regiment, the French not only carried the village at the point of the bayonet, but killed about 100 of one single battalion, which at the same time had lost all its officers. I saw a colonel, commander of a cavalry regiment, stumble with his horse and break his left thigh-bone. Some of his soldiers came to assist him, and while requesting them not to carry him away but to allow him to look on at the combat, he was shot in the left arm. "Now, boys," he said, "it is getting hot here; take me away." He was taken, and scarcely carried away fifty yards, when he got another shot in the chest, and was killed instantaneously. I saw another case of bravery of a sergeant belonging to the 28th Regiment. When wounded by two bullets, on his left arm and in the back, he came running

to Dr. Beigel, of London, who was on duty, and operating in the hospital, asking him whether it would be dangerous to life if he returned to his regiment to continue taking part in the combat. Scarcely had the doctor replied in the negative than the sergeant took to his heels and returned in full speed to fight the French. The battle continued during the whole day, the French line extending from Sapignies, which they had taken, down to Ligny and Tilloy. When the sun began to sink they had their posts in some of the streets of Bapaume itself, about thirty yards distant from the Prussian outposts, exchanging shots with them. The 65th Regiment now began to prepare for a fight in the streets, to build barricades at every entrance of the town, and to turn every window into a loophole. The aspect of the town was terrible indeed, the inhabitants, full of fear, fled into the cellars, and even the soldiers looked earnest and gloomy, for the French army was twice, if not three times, as numerous as that of the Prussians, numbering 45,000 men, with forty heavy guns of the marine. During several hours, General von Kummer was seen between the line of the advancing posts, exposing himself to the French fire, and one of his adjutants was wounded. Fortunately the battle did not extend into Bapaume, and at about midnight orderlies arrived with the intelligence that the enemy had left that part of the town which he had taken, and was retreating on the whole line. This, I suppose, was for two reasons; first, because the first battalion of the 65th Regiment had carried before dark, at the point of the bayonet, the villages of Ligny, Tilloy, and Harlencourt—an advance which counteracted all the French had gained during the day; and secondly, the French learned that their losses had been far more numerous than they had imagined. The ambulance of Bapaume having been overcrowded, in the course of a few hours an hospital was established within the spacious rooms of the old barracks, where in the evening I saw about 600 wounded soldiers, fifty of the number being French. The total amount of the losses on both sides is not yet known. I estimate it at 3,000 at least.

To-day we hear that the enemy, pursued by two regiments of cavalry, had gone as far back as Groiselle.

That General Faidherbe should have done no more with his Army of the North, whose advance was so eagerly looked for in Paris, is less surprising than that he should have been able to bring it into a state of so much efficiency. He seems to have resisted a pressure like that to which General Chanzy yielded, and when he went to battle left his worst

regiments behind. It must have been one of these latter which an occasional Correspondent saw at Boulogne, on the 26th of December, and which is described in the following letter:—

Perhaps your readers, and especially those familiar with Boulogne, will be interested in learning what has been going on there recently. On arriving a few days ago, instead of the familiar faces of the custom-house officers, who generally crowd round when the English steamer lands her passengers, I saw nothing but armed men. I say armed by courtesy, as I will by-and-by explain. These men were the *Mobilisés de la Somme*, the majority having retreated from Abbeville, as I subsequently learnt from one of them, who seemed delighted to have done so, for he added, "It was time to go, for the Prussians had entered at the other gate." And well they might retreat, for, with their piston-guns, without much ammunition, scarcely drilled and badly officered, they could not have done much for the cause of their country. It was late in the afternoon, and as their drill had just terminated, I postponed further scrutiny of the men until next morning.

In the evening I went to the Café Véyez, where one is always certain to find nine-tenths of the officers quartered in Boulogne; and plenty of the *Mobilisés* were there, sure enough. They seemed as raw as their soldiers, and were expressing to one another their childish admiration of their uniforms. Some had revolvers, which they took much pleasure in showing to everybody, until an impatient customer (no doubt an American) told them, loud enough for all the café to hear him, that "in his country every child above nine years of age knew the use of those toys." This had quite a depressing effect on the officers. Entering into conversation with them, I tried to ascertain their opinion about the present state of things. They had a vague notion that matters were getting better for France. They had been obliged to retreat because they had no breech-loading arms, but "they would have some soon, and then——" The Government of the National Defence they neither liked nor disliked. It was the same with regard to England. "The English ought to have lent us a hand," they said; "we fought the Crimean war for them." This was new to me who had just read Kinglake.

Next morning, at half-past six, bugles sounded, and four companies assembled at the Douane to receive tenpence-halfpenny (two days' pay) and a loaf (two days' rations). This took three hours and a half. Most of the men had been lodging in houses in the town, but a great many had been lying on

some straw in the entrepôt, and looked dirty and cold. At last the "distribution" was over, and they went up the Grande Rue to the foot of the ramparts, where they were to be drilled. The scene was simply ludicrous. The officers, with one or two exceptions, kept aloof, talking with their friends; one or two with some sergeants and corporals read out of a little blue manual the theory of skirmishing, and from time to time gave orders: *Avancez en tirailleurs! Feu à volonté! Visez haut!* These commands, especially the latter, were obeyed with alacrity, the men firing at the trees on the ramparts as if they were Prussians. Although the men had muzzle-loaders, yet some were supposed to be tiring with breech-loaders, and made a pretence of loading accordingly, never putting their hand to a place where a pouch ought to have been, but merely acting as though they were opening and shutting a snuff-box. Judging by the rapidity of their movements, the breech-loaders they are to receive will blaze away a good many rounds per minute. Most of the men, however, were engaged in position drill. Then they formed in battalion, and performed sundry evolutions in so clumsy a manner that the officers gave it up in despair, split the battalion into squads of six and ten men, and ordered skirmishing again. This seemed to afford the men no small delight, which was expressed by a general hurrah. "It is difficult to teach what one is ignorant of one's self," remarked one officer to another.

Of discipline there was none. The men never saluted their officers, and spoke to them with easy, and in some cases impudent, familiarity. Some had uniforms, but few had sheaths for their bayonets or pouches for their ammunition. Everything about them was dirty. The Boulonnais found all this quite natural. "What can you expect?—they are *Mobilisés*." After drill there was a rush to the Sous-Préfecture to read the despatches, and especially a large placard signed "Léon Gambetta." This placard gave a thousand and one reasons why the wounds inflicted by Prussian arms were not to be feared; they were not so dangerous as was thought; the wound of a Prussian triangular bayonet was but the prick of a pin; and, besides, the Prussians being in such compact masses, it was easier to charge into them, as there was a certainty of driving a bayonet into somebody, &c. I may yet be able to send you a copy of this curious document. The Mobiles read every line of it, but did not seem convinced, especially as there was a wounded Turco, who did not look any the better for the treatment he had received at the hands

of his enemies. He was, however, in good spirits, and was desirous of fighting again as soon as he had recovered.

Later in the day I rode to Le Portel, a fishing village six miles distant, where I found another battalion of *Mobilisés* at drill. Certainly they were in better condition than those at Boulogne. When the distribution of bread came, two companies had to go without, as there was not enough. Five or six threw down their arms; the adjutant drew out a pistol, put into it enough shot and powder to blow his hand off if he fired, and threatened to make an example. Whereupon the mutineers began to blubber, with the exception of one, who told his officer he would serve him as he had done the previous day. I inquired afterwards what that was, and was told that this very man had torn the officer's coat from off his back and roughly shaken him, without anybody interfering. There seemed to be little more than bread to eat. On the sands a dozen men were roasting a small pig, and were bargaining with a fisherman for a gull; he wanted two francs for it, and they offered eight sous for it, but the man was firm and kept his bird.

I rode back to Boulogne; the ostler of the stable whence I had hired my horse told me he had been giving instruction in riding to four officers, who, however, had got tired of it after two or three lessons, and protested against being made Uhlans of. To sum up, what I saw of the *Mobilisés* gave me but a poor idea of their capacity for fighting, and it can only be hoped that they will not for a long time have to face an enemy.

During the month, gallant Phalsburg, disdaining to capitulate, and yet having no means of prolonging its defence, opened its gates to the enemy, compelled to take this course by want of food. Montmédy also, which had long been a sharp thorn in the side of the invaders, surrendered on the 24th of December, after a severe bombardment. Mézières, which had been so often summoned and threatened, was compelled to capitulate on the second day of the new year. All these towns, the fortifications of which were constructed when the range of artillery was very much less than it is now, suffered terribly under the bombardment.

Mr. J. Denistoun Wood, a gentleman who visited the "head-quarters" of the French Peasant Relief Fund at Sedan, wrote there, two days after the surrender of Mézières, the following account of his visit to the latter town:—

I was glad to avail myself yesterday of the invitation of M. Gulden, the Protestant pastor of this town, to accompany

him to Mézières, which he had determined to visit in order to ascertain whether any of the members of his church there had been injured by the recent bombardment. We started about ten o'clock in the morning, in a small open carriage; and as the distance is only about fourteen miles, we ought to have accomplished the journey in a little more than two hours, if our horse had not been a wretched animal, which more than once came to a dead stop. The weather continued very cold (my breath freezing on my beard and moustache), and the whole country was one vast sheet of white. After some time we saw, on a little hill on the right, the Château de Belle-Vue, where the Emperor signed the capitulation, and we soon afterwards passed the house (now converted into an inn) where the famous interview took place between him and Bismarck. Then came into view a hill with a building on its summit, from which the King of Prussia and Moltke watched the battle. We now overtook endless trains of waggons, full of huge, round, flat loaves, brought all the way from Germany, and of quarters of slaughtered beasts, red and repulsive in appearance. Now and then, too, was to be seen a waggon laden with ammunition. The stream of traffic reminded me of what used to be seen along the road leading to one of the large gold-fields of Victoria, when everything that was used had to be brought from Melbourne. At each entrance of one or two villages through which we passed, boards were fastened to the trees, with the words "Rinderpest, Peste Bovine," written on them, and at one spot we observed a man digging a grave for a beast. On the other side of the road we saw a man whom we at first supposed to be similarly engaged, but by-and-by made out that he was skinning a horse which had probably been killed by some stray shell. How completely roads (like everything else in this part of France) exist merely for German uses, was proved by the fingerposts, or rather boards fastened to poplars, indicating the way "nach" this place and that place. As we approached Mézières we passed barricades which had been erected across the road. If I remember rightly, there were three of them, at different points—one of planks and the other two of stones. We saw also ropes of plaited straw which had been fastened to the trees and stretched across the road, so as to impede the advance of cavalry. On crossing the railway we saw the telegraph wires trailing along the ground, but already the Germans were at work raising and stretching them. Not far from Mézières we passed a small gang of French prisoners. One could not but feel pity for the poor fellows, so I handed over all the half-franc pieces in my pocket to M. Gulden to

give to them. He of course asked permission from the sergeant in charge of them, who, being accosted in German, was at first under the pleasing delusion that some sympathizing fellow-countryman wished to make him a present; but he was speedily undeceived.

As we drew still nearer to the town we were able to make out the gaunt gable-ends, with great gaps where walls should have been, and we could trace a faint cloud of smoke, but the spire of the principal church rose high in the air, apparently uninjured. At the gate we were rather dismayed at being asked for our pass, for as the Commandant of Sedan had assured M. Gulden that none was necessary, we were not provided with any. The pastor, however, being an Alsatian, and therefore speaking German as fluently as a native, was able to persuade the sentry to allow the carriage to proceed to the guard-house, where he was to seek permission from an officer to enter the town. On reaching the guard-house, however, no officer was to be seen, and no hindrance was offered to our progress. When we reached the part of the town which had suffered most severely from the bombardment, the scene of destruction which presented itself baffles description. About one-third of Mézières, according to the computation of M. Gulden, who is well acquainted with it, lies in ruins. I had seen Bazeilles the day before, and terrible as were the traces of the work of destruction there, they were not so striking (at the present time at all events) as those in this part of Mézières. At Bazeilles the walls of the houses are standing, and the streets are free of débris, but at Mézières, in many places, the site of the house is a mere waste, and not a stone of the front wall has been left standing. The narrow streets were so choked up with fallen stones that it was difficult in many places to get along. Groups of German soldiers were picking their steps over the heaps of rubbish. Some of them had made their way to some cellar, where they had discovered a treasure in the shape of bottles of wine. At one place we saw a number of people looking in, and upon inquiring the reason, we were informed by a German that a cellar had fallen in and buried five soldiers; whether or not they had been all killed was not known. We made our way to the church, and as we entered it trod upon heaps of wheat. Several shells had penetrated the building. One had come through the east window, making a great gap in the stained glass. There were also one or two holes in the roof, through which the sky could be seen. The altar was a mass of ruins, among which I picked up as relics a broken finial, a piece of an iron ornament, and a fragment of a shell. When the Allies invested Mézières,

after the battle of Waterloo, a shell was thrown into the north aisle, which has remained sticking in the roof ever since. The church will long bear more grievous traces of the siege of 1870.

It was impossible to ascertain with any certainty the number of civilians who were killed during the bombardment. We heard some accounts, which were probably greatly exaggerated. One woman told us, with much emotion, of fourteen persons having been killed in a cellar, among them a woman who had just been delivered of her first child, together with the baby and the midwife. A young officer informed M. Gulden that the total number of the civil population killed was but twenty-eight, and that there were very few wounded. We had some *bouillon* at the house of a confectioner, an old man, who told us, trembling with excitement, how his other house had been destroyed. We found huddled together in a room at the bottom of a court the family of a druggist, whose house had been utterly swept away. Here and there wandered through the streets gendarmes and swordless French officers. We had unfortunately little opportunity of looking about us, for no one was allowed to leave the town after two o'clock; and as our sluggish horse had made our journey a long one, our stay in Mézières was extremely limited. However, M. Gulden and I have just arranged to go again to-morrow by an omnibus, which is now running daily between it and Sedan. We were considerably delayed in leaving by the stream of waggons which was pouring through the narrow streets. Many of the houses that are still standing bear the marks of shells. Close to the gate lay a dead horse, with a hole in its shoulder, and a pool of blood beside it, and a foot or two off was the red cap of a soldier. At her earnest entreaty we took up a woman into our carriage to get her out of the town. She had come from Sedan to see her son, who was a soldier, but he had been marched away as a prisoner before her arrival. On our way back to Sedan we passed the carriage of Colonel Lennox, R.E., driving into Mézières, and we afterwards saw a train moving along the railway. As it was after five when we reached Sedan, we found the gate closed; however, after some little delay, we obtained admission. At Sedan it is said to-day that 300 persons are missing at Mézières, but no reliance can be placed upon such rumours. In fact, until the ruins of the houses have been somewhat cleared away, it must be impossible to know how many have perished.

The bombardment commenced at seven on Saturday morning, and lasted, without intermission, until noon on Sunday. It

is said that a white flag was hung out at seven on Sunday morning, but it was not observed by the Germans. M. Gulden told me that while he was reading the prayers in his church on Sunday he distinctly heard at intervals the sound of the cannonade—a solemn kind of response.

Out of the German occupation of the north and north-western departments of France an incident arose, in the month of December, which, in certain easily conceivable states of the public mind in this country, might have suddenly extended the area of the war, and perhaps entirely changed its issues.

On the 28th of December, the Correspondent at Havre wrote:—

The all-absorbing topic at present is the gross and flagrant insult to the British flag by the Prussians, at Duclair, on Wednesday last. English residents, English merchants and brokers, are wild with indignation that such a cool and deliberate outrage should be perpetrated in the broad daylight, within a day's sail of England, and within less than thirty miles of an English gunboat. Here are the facts:—Six vessels, flying the Union Jack, provided with the necessary passports, permits, &c., after discharging their cargoes of coal, are quietly sailing down the river, when on reaching Duclair they are deliberately fired at, boarded by Prussian soldiers, scuttled, and sunk; the crews have barely time to escape, leaving their money and effects behind them; they are obliged to pass the night without shelter; next day they make their way to Rouen, and are sent home *via* Dieppe by the English Consul.

We are anxious to know what action the authorities will take in the matter. It is a sad state of affairs if such a violation of neutrality passes unnoticed. The *Journal du Havre*, commenting on the subject, says: "We are convinced that England, so proud of the privileges of her citizens, will inquire quickly into this affair. In it her honour, her dignity, and her security are at stake. If she allows such an act to be committed with impunity, she will lower herself in the rank of nations to the fourth order."

It is to be hoped that the Admiralty will see the necessity of sending us a more formidable war-vessel to protect English interests than the tiny little gunboat at present here, which is, no doubt, a model of tidiness and smartness, as her officers are of courtesy and kindness; but that is not quite enough under the present circumstances, and we ought to have a vessel at least equal in size to the other men-of-war of various nations at present in the harbour.

The latest intelligence of the movements of the Prussians in

this district is that they are in considerable force at Yvetot, where they seem to have fixed their head-quarters. Yesterday about 200 entered Bolbec, and imposed a requisition for 500 sacks of oats. There is a strong reconnoitring party of French in the neighbourhood of Saint Romain, but no skirmish has taken place since Saturday; on which day it is stated that several houses in the town of Bolbec sustained serious damage from the fire of the cannon on both sides, and that several of the inhabitants were severely wounded. The Francs-tireurs who were killed in the engagement were interred with all honour, while those who fell into the hands of the enemy were, it is stated, shot immediately. It is the general opinion that those free-shooting corps have no mercy to expect from the enemy, should they fall into his hands; therefore it is that they are generally brave in action, and fight to the last before surrendering. General Moquart has come into Havre to rest his men; and indeed the soldiers require rest and the comforts of life more than usual during this trying weather, particularly those who are doing outpost duty. They are relieved every hour, yet I am told that two men were frozen to death while on duty near Harfleur on Christmas Eve.

From Rouen we hear that the inhabitants are feeling sensibly the presence of the Germans amongst them. A letter from that city is published in to-day's *Journal*, in which the writer says they are completely at the mercy of Manteuffel, and that their streets and promenades are encumbered with Prussian soldiers. He describes provisions as being frightfully dear, and does not know how people will get on should this state of things last long. Everything that arrives in the market, even the tobacco, is reserved exclusively for the enemy, and the inhabitants must go without the enjoyment of smoking. An English gentleman who came from Rouen yesterday affirms that the Prussian army in Normandy numbers only about 25,000 men. He says that by their marching and countermarching they establish the impression that they are double the number. He gives, as an example, that on Tuesday morning last a body of men, numbering 10,000, and carrying with them thirty-nine pieces of cannon, left Rouen by the road to Caen, and that some hours after, the same body, with the same number of cannon, re-entered the town by the Oissel road, thereby making it appear to the inhabitants that one column of men had left while another entered. The French authorities, I am sure, have cognizance of this stratagem, and cannot be deceived by such fantastic movements.

Dec. 30.—What steps are the authorities about to take in the affair of Duclair? Will England allow such an outrage to go by unpunished? These and similar questions are what one hears on all sides. And yet, as I telegraphed to you to-day, the Germans have not stopped at Duclair in offering their daring and deliberate insults to the British flag. After firing on and sinking six vessels sailing under the English flag on the 21st instant, at Duclair, they seize a seventh, lying in the port of Rouen, on the 24th, force her crew ashore, and tow her down the river, no doubt to share the same fate as those that left before her.

The French journals certainly have reason to comment at length on this affair, and it will tend much to widen the breach at present existing between us should the Government of England pass the matter over lightly. If it is not taken in hand at once, sternly and resolutely, if sufficient apology and reparation are not immediately exacted, the whole business will appear to French eyes very much like a second edition of the *Alabama* affair. But what apology or reparation can Count Bismarck make for so cool and premeditated an affair? The journals of this evening publish extracts on the subject from all the English papers. Three French men-of-war went up the Seine yesterday, but it is feared they cannot reach Duclair in consequence of the sinking of those vessels. There are two other English vessels still at Rouen, but I dare say they will be taken, if they have not been seized already, by the Prussian soldiers to complete the blockade, or the barrier rather, in the Seine. English vessels coming near Dieppe, Fécamp, or other seaport towns occupied by the Germans must in future look out, or their crews may be replaced by soldiers wearing spiked helmets and carrying the authority of King William in their pocket.

The sailors who arrived in London from Duclair gave very contradictory accounts of the treatment they had received from the Prussians. It appeared, however, that they had been suddenly and peremptorily ordered to leave their vessels, and that by officers who, not understanding the English language, were not able to make an operation disagreeable in itself less unpleasant by courteous explanation. When the facts became known, it appeared that the British colliers had been seized as an act of military necessity by order of the Prussian General commanding the district. The French were approaching the town with gunboats, with which they had once before inflicted heavy loss on the enemy, and the colliers were seized, partly to prevent their falling into the hands of the French, and partly in

order that by sinking them the Germans might render the river unnavigable. The subject was treated by the English press with great moderation, and with a disposition not to see in the act more than those who had committed it had intended. The Prussian Government sent a semi-official communication to the German press, in which it was represented that, although these ships were the property of neutrals, they were seized in waters subject to the legitimate authority of a belligerent engaged in active operations of war. According to the law of nations, men-of-war, if belonging to a neutral Power, are inviolable, even in waters where war is going on; but merchantmen do not partake of the same privilege, and come under the law of the locality in which they may happen to find themselves. The seizure in this case was not a political, but a purely military measure. French men-of-war having repeatedly steamed up the river, and, by landing troops and firing at the German posts, inflicted damage upon them, it was probable that the English ships would be impressed by the French commanders, and used for similar operations. The Germans clearly owed it to themselves to forestall such a contingency, and by sinking the ships close the mouth of the river. The embargo laid upon the ships, therefore, was a perfectly justifiable measure. The right of embargo in such a dilemma legally belongs to every State, and has been frequently exercised by all in turn. At the same time, this right involves the duty of allowing ample compensation; as the right has been taken advantage of, so will the duty be fulfilled by the German Government.

These explanations were accepted in England probably less for their technical value than for the evidence they offered of a fair and equitable disposition on the part of the Germans, and they were soon followed by the communication to Earl Granville of the subjoined message from Count Bismarck to Count Bernstorff:—

“Versailles, Jan. 8, 1871.

“The report of the Commander of that part of our army by which the English collier-ships were sunk in the Seine has not yet arrived; but, as far as our intelligence goes, the general outline of the facts is known.

“You are authorized, in consequence, to say to Lord Granville, that we sincerely regret that our troops, in order to avert immediate danger, were obliged to seize ships which belonged to British subjects.

“We admit their claim to indemnification, and shall pay to the owners the value of the ships, according to equitable estimation, without keeping them waiting for the decision of the question who is finally to indemnify them. Should it be proved

that excesses have been committed which were not justified by the necessity of defence, we should regret it still more, and call the guilty persons to account.

"The official answer to Lord Augustus Loftus' note will follow after the report from the army has been received."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE first consequence of the failure of General Trochu's sortie of December 21 was a resolution on the part of the German commanders to proceed to more active measures against the defences of Paris. Until this time, the Germans, instead of erecting works as for an active siege, had fortified themselves within their own lines, constructing redoubts and batteries on all the chief points of the encircling lines of investment, until the latter were rendered impregnable. But the use which the French had made of Mont Avron in the recent sortie, and the valuable support which their operations obtained from that work, led them to resolve to compel the besieged to contract their circle of defence. In the sortie of November 30 the French had pushed forward their whole eastern line and seized a strip of ground, about two miles in width, from Drancy to the Marne near Neuilly, which had before been debatable, and which included a new commanding position on the plateau of Avron. On the 21st of December this position was made the starting-point of an attack which led to the capture of Ville Evrart and Maison Blanche. The Germans determined to destroy it as a French military position, and with a rapidity and secrecy which surprised everybody, erected batteries for that purpose.

The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony, who had witnessed the preparations for the bombardment, wrote from Chelles on the 27th of December:—

The bombardment of Mont Avron—that event which has for days past formed the chief topic of discussion and for anticipation—commenced this morning. Interesting as the topic was, I was naturally precluded from dwelling upon it with that detail which would have been desirable, and the same necessity for reserve compels me even now to withhold many particulars of great interest. For many nights past—indeed ever since the change of policy which I noted as having taken place immediately after the great sortie at Champigny and Villiers—the woods which cover the German advanced posi-

tions before Montfermeil and Clichy have been full of life. Working parties toiled in the dark, or by moonlight; then came the heavy roll of the siege artillery, and of the tumbrels weighted with the heavy ammunition. For some days past the guns have been in position, and, indeed, I believe a couple of experimental shots were fired so early as the 24th instant. The delay took place in order that a full supply of ammunition should be brought. Whether it has attained the object I am not in a position to state. About half the guns were carried direct by the Soissons Railway to the last available station on the foreposts, and were almost immediately placed in position on the batteries. The rest came *viâ* Lagny, and were destined for the more southerly batteries. Most of the guns are from Spandau, and have already done more or less service in the sieges of Strasburg, Toul, La Fère, and Soissons. It would be improper for me at the present juncture to particularize either their calibre or number. Those familiar with German siege artillery will require no special information on this point. There can be no harm in roughly denoting the positions of the batteries, since the fire of to-day must have effectually revealed this much at least to the French. They begin on the south, on the farther side of the Marne, in close proximity to Noisy-le-Grand. There is a gap across the valley of Chelles, but they begin again where the height of Montfermeil pits out into the plain, and continue at intervals with a slight sweep, of which the convexity is towards Avron, farther to the north than, and in front of, the village of Raincy. The French have been working hard on and around Avron ever since the 2nd; indeed before it. It is understood that in all, standing opposite our batteries, and in a position to reply to them, there are about sixty cannon, exclusive, of course, of those on the forts. These are chiefly, if not altogether, naval guns, of recent construction and considerable calibre—say 64-pounders. A few may be taken as heavier. I do not transgress the needful reticence when I state that the German batteries have, according to this computation, a numerical advantage, with possibly a parity as to weight of metal, gun for gun, and the advantage also of greater precision—a notable feature of German artillery *in se*, and backed by special shooting accuracy on the part of the gunners, who are not drawn from the field artillery, but have been specially imported from the fortresses, and are thoroughly conversant with the handling of these arms of precision. The design and construction of the batteries for the reception of the guns are the work of Colonel Oppermann, Chief of the Engineer Staff of the Maas Army, and Colonel Hoffmann, Chief of the Artil-

lery Staff; and I am satisfied that the most experienced judges, if conversant with the positions, would admit that all that skill and knowledge, both practical and theoretical, can effect, has been bestowed on the duty. The siege train and the detailed conduct of the bombardment is, I believe, under the supervision of Colonel Barge, an officer of great experience in heavy artillery. Of course the fire of the French forts is an important element in the consideration of the eventualities of the bombardment of Mont Avron, and it would be blindness to ignore it.

If the French have ears to hear, they could scarcely have been ignorant of the fact that something exceptional must have been going on for nights past behind the sheltering fringe of trees. It may have been that they knew all about it, and like a boxer who disdains to hit his antagonist till he has "peeled," that they refrained from disturbing the operation. Whatever was the reason, there has been comparatively little firing on the works during their construction; nor do I believe that the half-hearted and disastrous forward move on Ville Evrart and La Maison Blanche, on the afternoon of the 21st, had any reference to an attempt to interrupt the preparations. Had such been the case, artillery would surely have been brought up, and the posts which were occupied on the evacuation of the Saxon advance guards would have been held and strengthened in such a manner as would have prevented their recapture the same night under the absurdly easy circumstances which characterized that episode. The fact stands that it was not till the night which preceded the commencement of the bombardment that the French batteries seemed to awake to the position. All night long the Saxon pioneers were hard at work with their keen axes cutting down, ungratefully but necessarily, the friendly trees which had sheltered their previous labours. It is the way of the world—to the devil with a friend when you have no further need for him. Among the Saxon woodmen who did not spare those trees came not a few shells during the night, not only to their discomfort, but to that of the battalions who, ever since the guns were placed in position, were sent on to the foreposts nightly to double the usual guards for the protection of the big toys in the front. It was, I believe, originally intended that the firing should begin at seven o'clock. Half an hour before, I was out in the cold morning air, listening for the first booming report, the emblem and herald, as it would be, of a new phase of the war, and, let us hope, of an early termination. Seven passed, and all was still silent—for the French had left off their firing. Eight came, and the keenness of expectancy became absolutely pain-

ful. Was the whole thing after all a snare, and a feint? Were these "quakers" whose cold sides I had leaned against the day before, and was the ammunition beside each a "dummy"? No; the evidences of one's senses contradicted this. Was, then, the day postponed yet once again? No, only the hour. At exactly a quarter to nine the first gun crashed its report below me in front of Montfermeil, and I could hear its angry whiz as it cut the air in crossing the intervening space. In three minutes more the air was full of a din of deep diapason. There was nothing to see, and I saw it—such may serve as a summary of my day's work. At daylight the snow had begun to fall, not heavily and in big flakes, but in feathery particles, which filled and whitened the air, making obstacles invisible a quarter of a mile off. Of course the gunners had got their sights and ranges the day before, and their shot must have been "there or thereabouts," but Avron was as invisible as if it had been on the farther side of the North Pole. The work gave one the idea of fighting with knives in a dark room. At first it seemed as if the French artillerymen were taken by surprise. It was not till nine o'clock that Avron sent back the first instalment of its reply. When it did begin, though, it went to work with a will, but rather wildly, the shells flying about promiscuously in a fashion that impaired the safety of any given point. By ten this duel in the dark was in full sway, the air incessantly lacerated and tortured by the whistle of the projectiles, so that one might have imagined himself in a calm at sea, with the rush of a coming squall bearing down upon him. The German fire was like clockwork; three times I timed the number of rounds fired in a minute, and the results were—24, 23, 25. Of course these figures are valueless as indication of the rapidity of the firing, without information as to the number of the guns, which I am not at liberty to give; but they afford remarkable evidence of the systematic steadiness of the practice. The French fire came more in spurts and gusts, and then was silent for some half a minute. When in full blaze it was so rapid as to be continuous, and not to admit of being timed itself, or of one timing the German fire. About eleven the batteries at Bondy—as well as I could judge by the direction of the sound—took up their parable, and were replied to by the extreme right flank of the German position, which has been designed amiably looking towards the said Bondy, with a view to such a demonstration. All day long the fire continued, with no great variation to speak of. Perhaps it was heaviest from twelve till two. After that hour the French fire seemed to slacken visibly. There were longer intervals

between the spurts, and the spurts were not so animated. The forts of Rosny and Nogent, however, chimed in occasionally, covering the slackness of Avron's efforts. About sundown there was a marked weakness in the enemy's fire, the German fire continuing meanwhile in a steady, slogging, stolid fashion. As I write (nine o'clock at night) both sides have partially suspended operations. About every five minutes I hear a report, but cannot say from which it comes. No doubt tomorrow the air will be again full of sound.

This bombardment of Mont Avron is taken here generally as but the forerunner of a more extended effort on the south, to commence with the Meudon batteries on the 29th instant. This is the current gossip. I am not in possession of any official information on the subject, and would not give it if I were. All day long the troops on the eastern side stood in quarters ready for anything that might turn up, and some batteries of guard field artillery were actually out in the cold behind Pont Iblon—but there was no hostile demonstration. At an early hour this morning Prince George of Saxony came to Chelles with the design, no doubt, of witnessing the commencement of the bombardment—Chelles being the most eligible place—but the snow in the air hid everything, and hearing was the only sense called into requisition.

It seems the French are refining on the "legitimate" horrors of war. I have seen a Chassepôt bullet—it has never been fired of course—which looks all right outside, but which when dissected is found to be in seventeen pieces, curiously jagged and angular. I suppose it will presently come to firing handfuls of rusty nails and the clippings of zinc roofs.

Margency, December 28.—The bombardment of Mont Avron, of the commencement of which yesterday morning you are already aware, has been attended with the happiest results. After the despatch of my letter of last night the firing continued sluggishly during the darkness, and this morning the French ability to reply, measured at all events by their reply, was so feeble as to admit of a considerable further relaxation on the part of the Germans. During the day their firing has been continued at the rate of about five to eight shots per minute, chiefly from the guns on the right-hand batteries in front of Raincy. These batteries have been, in the words of Mr. Swiveller, a "staggerer" to Mont Avron. The French batteries on that commanding position were for the most part constructed to dominate the valley of the Marne. Thus they could cope face to face with our batteries at Noisy-le-Grand, they could sweep the "horseshoe," they

could pound into Chelles, till a man was thankful when he was out of it, and they could even send their missiles into Montfermeil. But that was the most northerly point on which they looked out. Consequently our batteries farther north, in front of Raincy, actually enfiladed the batteries and parallels of Mont Avron, throwing in a flanking fire, against which there was no defence. Of course a short time would have remedied this defect. Even in frosty weather a battery can nearly as soon alter its face as can a hypocrite his, but just as the mask fails the hypocrite *in extremis*, so it becomes impossible for the battery to change its front in the teeth of a heavy and unrelenting fire. This circumstance accounts for the collapse of the Avron batteries earlier than I had allowed myself to anticipate. There seems to be no question as to the collapse; the fire is all but extinguished, and the four battalions of French infantry which were supporting the gunners when the firing began yesterday morning are known to have fallen back off the table-land with considerable loss. Our casualties from yesterday's fire are twenty-three men killed and wounded. I am surprised that it should have been so heavy, spite of the unquestionably heavy fire, since the artillerymen are protected by solid parapets, seven feet high, and the supporting infantry are sheltered in the parallel by earthen protections of equal height. The more one thinks of it, the more one is astonished at the thoroughness of the surprise which the French have allowed themselves to suffer. How complete this has been is obvious from the fact that our right flank batteries thoroughly raked their positions as I have stated. Had they had the remotest conception that batteries were ready to be unmasked behind the trees right under their nose, they would have surely taken measures at least to protect themselves from this flanking fire, when they could have done so by a few hours' labour of a body of men with spades and pickaxes, even if they could not have done more in the way of organizing a more or less effective reply.

It was confidently anticipated that by to-morrow afternoon not only will the last gun be silenced on Mont Avron, but that the French will have bodily evacuated the position. What will happen should that anticipation prove correct, or approximately correct, I shall not waste time in conjecturing, for the simple reason that there is no occasion for me to conjecture; but there would be much indiscretion in definite allusion to ulterior projects.

Yesterday and to-day Paris has had shell-fire brought home to her. The turbulent men of Belleville, who remained at a

discreet distance from the bursting shells on the banks of the Marne, have had these missiles exploding in their midst. Père-la-Chaise may have had strange destructive visitors among its tombs. But it was chiefly into the arrondissement of La Villette, that congeries of goods stations, canal basins, slaughter-houses, and factories, that the batteries of Raincy sent their shells. In all, over a dozen were fired, only experimentally, and as a broad hint that whence these came there were lots more. The range is no great feat—only some 7,000 paces. It must have been a new sensation to the artillerymen in Forts Aubervilliers and Romainville to listen to the whiz of shells in the air high over their heads, and to listen to the crash of the explosions in their rear. The forts have been strangely quiet during the two days. It follows that if batteries can shoot over them, they, with at least equal weight of metal, can touch the batteries; but they have hardly tried to do so. I don't know for certain that they have fired a shot.

Other results have been attained by the two days' work. The German batteries did not all face Mont Avron. They "set to partners," with a view to other contingencies than the mere silencing of Mont Avron. The 22-gun battery farthest to the right has two fronts. Its left portion looks to Avron; then, by the formation of a very obtuse angle, its right flank is thrown back and faces low on Bondy and Bobigny. It was from the guns on this section that La Villette got its "baptism of fire." This arrangement was devised to admit of the engaging of the French batteries in front of Bondy. There has been a feeble fire from that quarter, but of a character calculated to give the impression that the batteries which were believed to be there are elsewhere, and other circumstances to which I shall presently allude tend to confirm that idea. The French, although the large force of four divisions, if not more, which they maintained on the Bondy-Bobigny-Courneuve line for three days, commencing with the 21st instant, has partially dispersed and fallen back, still maintained, it is believed, quite a division, with its left on Bondy, and its right retired on the railway station at Bobigny. The camp occupied by this body has been broken up in the course of to-day, no doubt in consequence of the fire directed towards the positions named. That same railway station at Bobigny (on the Strasburg line) was of immense utility to the French in many obvious ways. If the German fire of yesterday and to-day has not convinced the French of the inadvisability of using the line so far for the future, the fact of its being commanded by the Raincy batteries cannot fail to be of

incalculable importance to the Germans in the event of any renewal of the French attempt to break out or extend their ground in the Le Bourget direction. There are sufficient indications that they mean—or perhaps one should speak in the past tense, and say meant—not to abandon finally their efforts in that quarter. They have constructed—I don't know indeed that they are finished—no fewer than six batteries at intervals across the plain between Courneuve and Drancy, pretty much on the line on which I described their infantry as standing on the afternoon of the 23rd. These could only have been intended to support an attack on Le Bourget by dealing more formidably than could field artillery either without *emplacements*, or in *emplacements* hastily thrown up, with the German artillery that is ready at a moment's notice to take up the Pont Iblon-Aulnay-Sevran line behind the inundations—that position which I have ventured to describe as virtually an entrenched camp. It was on this line that the German artillery stood on the 21st, and where, although unable to prevent the temporary capture of Le Bourget by the French, it paralyzed their succeeding efforts, and covered effectually the successful effort of the Guards for its recapture. That we should, therefore, have had warm work again in that quarter in a day or two, I have no manner of doubt: we may have so still. But these big-gun batteries at Raincy materially complicate the position for the French in any such essay. For these batteries, as a glance at your map will show you, rake the French batteries between Drancy and Courneuve; while the latter were firing on Le Bourget and Pont Iblon, the German gunners on the northern face of the Raincy batteries would be sending in upon the unprotected side of each French battery such a fire as must very soon cause them to desist. In effect, as I estimate the position, the Raincy batteries have made the Drancy-Courneuve batteries untenable, and have conclusively stopped the way for any repetition of an attempt to make a sortie in the Le Bourget-Pont Iblon direction.

But a series of lines, posts, fortifications, and so on, with which the French have begirt their capital, has pretty much the same attributes as one of those bladders which the children play with in the streets. If you punch into it in one place it either bursts, or then it must bulge out somewhere else. Now Paris won't "burst" just yet, to all appearance—taking the word burst as a synonyme for capitulate. So I take it she is almost bound, now that the Germans are punching in—indeed have punched in—upon her circumference about Mont Avron, to bulge out somewhere else with a big sortie. Where she

will haply swell, I have not the remotest notion. But I don't think it will be on my ground. The affair at Stains on the 21st has been made more of in the Versailles telegram than it merited. I think you may safely set down an *ausfall* of any other proportions than a demonstration, and occurring anywhere between Gonesse and St. Germain, not, indeed, as an utter impossibility physically, but as being impossible in a military sense, because certain on the face of things to be utterly disastrous in its results. But the quiet days are seemingly over—the days when one had day after day nothing to chronicle, and when one was driven to the unprofitable and arduous experiment of making bricks without straw. As to the proximity of a general bombardment on the south side, my colleague will be able to afford you more trustworthy information than I can pretend to do.

This question of a general bombardment of Paris presents two distinct phases, and the full distinction between the two I have nowhere seen brought out plainly. There is the bombardment of the forts as a preliminary either to bombardment of the *enceinte*, and subsequent storm of the city, or to a capitulation dictated to the inhabitants and garrison by the consideration that with the reduction of the outlying forts has gone their last ray of real hope. And there is the immediate bombardment of the city, necessitating a simultaneous engagement and adequate coping with the fire of the outlying forts. In the former alternative we have, as it were, two men fighting with daggers, with nothing to distract them. They go at it fiercely, and it may be that he who attacks has the best of it, in which case it is all over with the man who has his back to the wall, and to everything behind that wall. But it is possible also that the bout may be a drawn one, and this contingency involves serious consequences to the attacker. True, it would seem that he would only be where he was before he began offensive operations, and the ultimate event would be the same, under the coercion of starvation, as if he had never raised his hand to strike. But his prestige would be radically sapped, and the other side would take proportionate encouragement. It might be that his ultimate success would be seriously endangered.

Now, consider the other alternative. Here, if the premises are what they ought to be, you have a man with a dagger, and also a long lance, engaging with a man who has only his dagger. The former does not, then, require to win the dagger-duel to ensure him the success he is eager for; all that he needs is to make that a drawn battle. If he can keep in play (technically, "engage") the dagger-holder with his own

shorter weapon, while with his longer weapon he is sedulously poking over the other's head at what lies behind him—viz., his vitals—he inevitably wins the day. The lance in the simile I have chosen represents a few batteries of very far-reaching guns, which the Germans must have if they would bombard Paris. If they have, or will have these, and have other batteries besides capable of “engaging” the forts, then success seems within their grasp. Frankly, I question whether they will be able to do any great things by a systematic bombardment of the forts, and the forts alone. An equal weight of metal gives them no advantage, but bodes, indeed, their failure. Remember how many days of bombardment it cost us, and what pyramids of projectiles we threw before we rendered the Malakoff untenable. And we were close to the sea-board; yet, nevertheless, we had to pause again and again for supplies of ammunition. Every projectile thrown by the Germans represents arduous and long-continued toil to bring it to the cannon's mouth. We may depend the Parisians will strain every nerve to return the fire and to repair the damage it causes. It would then appear that to operate against the forts successfully would require both a stronger artillery, whether in calibre or in number, than that possessed by the French, and a large and continuous supply of ammunition. But a comparatively small array of artillery—of such weapons of precision as the German artillery consists of, and with the dexterous German artillery-men—would suffice to keep the guns of the forts in play, so that they could divert none of their attention; while a few guns of longer range were meanwhile negating the forts altogether, and pounding directly into Paris. The adoption of this expedient, supposing it successful, would save the carriage of the vast quantities of ammunition which a lengthened bombardment of the forts would necessitate. I have already given it as my humble conviction that a very short duration of such practice would suffice to end the siege, and with but comparatively little loss either of life or of property.

Highly creditable to the German besiegers are the friendly, and indeed cordial, terms which they have contrived to establish with the villagers around Paris. These, indeed, are mostly of the humbler classes, either labouring folk or the servants left in the villas, and nothing could exceed the kindness with which they are treated by those whom circumstances have so strangely placed among them, while they, for their part, appear to feel and appreciate this kindness. They are all picking up some little German, while the German soldiers are becoming quite proficient in a guttural broken French.

In the early days, by Sedan and by Metz, it seemed as if the French summarized the whole German language in an emphatic "nix," but now they are going deeper into the mysteries of the language. I have a Frenchman here in Margency, who is a fund of recurrent amusement to me. He is the gardener of the château in which I have rooms, and he and his wife remained behind in charge of the place. I casually discovered how handy and obliging were the pair, and how much better I should be waited on by the same than by the willing but clumsy German *diener*. I am rather a transitory resident, however, as the various places from which my letters are dated serve to indicate; but each time I come back, honest Auguste has a surprise for me in the acquisitions of German which he has made during my absence. Apart from what may be called "household words," the French peasant's acquisition of German chiefly develops itself in the direction of ability to put questions as to the state of the war and the probable period of its termination. On the other hand, the first French that a German learns is invariably the numerals and the appellations and values of the current coins. If every German soldier is not a master of Mr. Goschen's "Theory of Foreign Exchanges," he is, at all events, thoroughly at home in the relative values of French and German money, and when you now price a thing with a German "kaufmann" or *markettender*, it is as likely as not that he names the cost in francs and sous instead of thalers and groschen.

Livry, Dec. 29.—My location is in Margency, and there are advantages connected with that location as a head-quarter which I should be foolish to forfeit. But Margency is due north of Paris, and important operations perversely persist in taking place due east of Paris. I cannot give up Margency. I cannot stay there and take information at second hand so long as I am not blind; and I have not achieved the valuable distinguishing characteristic of Sir Boyle Roche's bird, of being in two places at once. It would be a great convenience, and save horse and man no end of hard work. When I got to Margency yesterday, after a long and cold ride, a good friend quietly told me that I had better be somewhere near Mont Avron to-night. There was nothing for it but to ride back again to the east side, and it is quite on the cards that I have had my ride for nothing.

Last night our batteries definitely shut up Mont Avron. It is "dead," in the expressive German phrase. For the first time for several weeks its sides were traversed by German patrols, who saw or heard nothing indicative of life. It is believed men and guns have alike cleared off it. Perhaps it

is just as well both for the men and guns, for before this information certain Saxon infantry-men were looking to the contents of their ammunition pouches and the setting of their bayonets, and certain artillerymen were handling long nails, which a not very vivid imagination might conjecture were for spiking purposes. The effect which these preparations portended was rendered unnecessary by the evacuation, and Avron is once again, as in the early days, neutral ground. How long it may remain so it might be inconvenient to prognosticate.

To-day the German batteries have been in full work against Fort Rosny, which has by no means allowed the transaction to be a one-sided one. Rosny has its satellites in the shape of batteries, and they chiefly have devoted themselves to the reply. It is believed that the fort has in a great measure denuded itself of artillery for their supply. The German batteries have also found leisure for an occasional salutation, not only in the direction of Bondy and Grand Drancy, but also of Paris itself, La Villette being the mark. Other German batteries are in course of completion on the north-east side, which will not only reduce to an absurdity any effort against Le Bourget, but will make the position of Fort Aubervilliers a little critical after preliminaries have been settled in the direction of Drancy.

Clichy, Dec. 30.—The term “elasticity,” as applied to the German outposts on this face of the environment, was matter for some derision when the attribute had to be exercised in a convex direction. But it must not be forgotten that if a line is elastic at all, it may be indented both ways. The elasticity, I must own, was pretty well tested in the outward direction—the tension was too strong to be pleasant. But now the suppleness is coming into play the other way. The artillery practice of the last three days has cleared the German front wonderfully. Last night the Saxon patrols were in Bondy, and there found silence and desertion. They were in Villemomble, in front of Raincy; and that village is now once again established as a regular Saxon outpost. Neuilly, which the French had continuously held from the beginning of the siege, they hold no longer, and our patrols perambulate it during the night. It is too near Nogent, while as yet Nogent’s teeth are unblunted, to be occupied regularly as a post; but there is a good time coming. Launay is also ours once more, and Gagny, which conventionally had never been utterly lost, is again Saxon beyond all question. The outpost line has made a real stride in the right direction; and as an evidence of this, take

the change which the forward movements have made to the northward of the positions of which I have been speaking. It was but the other day that I had to refer to the position of Le Bourget, projected right forward, at the apex of a triangle, standing alone out there in the plain, with Drancy almost between it and the line of the German outposts. Now the tables are turned. It is Drancy which is the Pharos away in the foreground of the French position, with Le Bourget in a line with it—indeed overlapping it on the north, and Bondy, patrolled by the Germans, nearer Paris than it on the south. If Ducrot is there still, he must feel his position sufficiently precarious. I think it quite probable that in a day or two a patrol, slyly creeping up to the confines of Drancy, will find that village also abandoned and silent.

The patrols had in the course of yesterday afternoon groped their way up the sides of Mont Avron, and brought back word that there were no French to be seen in the vicinity. But the night had fallen, and the young moon had risen, before Hauptmann von Zanthier, of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Regiment, stepped out on to the platform of the Raincy-Villemomble Station, where his company had its outpost quarters for the night, and summoned to turn out the first four patrols. Out tumbled the sturdy fellows, shaking off them the straw, as hens do the loose feathers, and falling into their places with that rapid silent method that speaks of real discipline. When the sergeant reported "all right," the little band, eighty in number, marched off the platform and took its steady way through the scattered village of Villemomble. Outside it we came—for I was an unattached companion of the gallant Hauptmann—on detached châteaux, standing in their grounds on the plain—residences that had been beautiful once, but which were now ghastly in their utter ruin. Straight on went the road, till one began to feel the gradual rise. We were on the slope of Avron. Then it bent to the left, for the hill was too steep to climb direct, and in the bend we came among the trees and brush, out of the middle of which are dug clearings, on which châteaux are built, looking out over the plain to the north. About half-way up the ascent we came on the line of French vedette-posts. They had certainly been very fond of Avron. What between barricades, entrenchments, rifle-pits, and loopholed houses, many a stout Teuton would have gone down before that position could have been forcibly carried over which we passed so peaceably in the silent moonlight. Working always round to the left, we reached the crest of the hill on that face of the plateau which looks out on Montfermeil, and where the

summit is marked by the batteries. Once inside them, there met our eyes one of the weirdest scenes that imagination could conjure up. Ground ploughed with shells, embrasures stove in, parallels all but obliterated, and yet not a single cannon left behind. But if the French have removed their cannon, they have left their dead. One slides and stumbles over a little ice puddle. The ice blushes up red in his face—it is frozen human blood. Behind the batteries and inside the breastworks the dead lie thick. Dead! No man who has long followed this war but must be so familiar with the aspect of slain men, that the original thrill and turn of the blood at the sight is a memory of the past at which he all but smiles. But the terrible ghastliness of these dead transcends anything I have ever seen or even dreamt of in the shuddering nightmare after my first battle-field. Remember how they were slain. Not with the nimble bullet of the needle-guns that drills a minute hole through a man and leaves him undisfigured, unless it has chanced to strike his face; not with the trenchant sabre cut of the dragoon; not with the sharp stab of the bayonet; but slaughtered with missiles of terrible weight, shattered into fragments by explosions of many pounds of powder, mangled and torn by massive fragments of iron. There lay behind one of the embrasures a form utterly headless—I suppose the shell had struck the hapless being full in the face and carried head and throat before it in its fierce rush. The guillotine could not have performed the operation more cleanly.

But what need to dwell in detail on such a topic? Let it suffice that there lay the unburied and abandoned dead among the snow stained with their blood, and with the depressions in those ghastly faces turned up to the calm moonlight, drifted up by the snow-flakes which had fallen since they had been shot down. When will they be buried? When will these wan faces cease to look up into the eyes of the moon, in silent but eloquent protestation against the institution called war? When will the stray human fragments over which one stumbles as he goes be gathered together, and their ghastliness be hidden beneath friendly earth? Not yet. Men will not dig graves as if they were blasting tunnels, and the earth is as hard as the bowels of Mont Cenis. The corpses on Mont Avron must lie there till a thaw comes. How long after it would be rash to prognosticate. That unfortunate group in the camp here, who had been sitting round the fire when the shells came and burst in it and blew one and all of them into the other world, must remain as it is—a horrible mockery of conviviality, for a time at least. To look at the

group from a little distance one would conclude that its members, lying or seated in a circle, were hobnobbing genially round a common pot or eating out of one dish. Come nearer and look inside that ring of squatting men, or what once were men. I care not how inured you are to sights of horror, you will turn away sick and scared from that circle of carnage. Great God! that man should be able so to mangle his fellow-man, made in thine image!

Behind the batteries, besides the relics I have alluded to, were found many evidences of the precipitation with which the French had evacuated the position. There were lots of wine—we drank some of it standing there among the dead—and piles of loaves, which the Saxon soldiers skewered on their bayonets. There were blankets, too, and military saddles, one of which, an officer's, Hauptmann von Zanthier philosophically annexed. Both in and about the camp, lying farther back, there was a considerable quantity of rice, and also many blankets, shoes, and soldiers' knapsacks. Lumps of horseflesh lay about or hung on cross-sticks. Investigations amongst the tents and mud huts brought to light bottles of rum and bags of peas. The ground was strewn with Chassepôts, and behind the batteries, as well as in the battery magazines, were gunpowder bags, containing each a charge, as well as many projectiles. The camp, and indeed the whole of the plateau, bore numerous traces of lengthened occupation. The French are the beastliest campers in the world, and they seem to have been exceptionally beastly in Mont Avron. Behind the camp lay the little straggling village of Avron, still smoking from the fire that raged in it during the morning. Whether kindled by a Prussian shell or by the last Frenchman, I do not know. There was not a sign of life on all the plateau, except a lurching cur who gnawed something under a waggon. What it was there were reasons that prevented me from investigating too closely. The greater part of the plateau has been occupied with vineyards, which are now of course trodden down and ruined. Stumbling through the stumps of the vines, I crossed the plateau and looked down over its farther verge. Below me lay the village of Rosny, easily to be distinguished by its lights. Above it was the horizon line, with Forts Rosny and Noisy standing up against the sky; and there were visible in their neighbourhood lights which seemed to indicate the new outpost line taken up by the French. Then across again to the south-eastern edge—and there lay the Marne silvered to whiteness in the moonlight; and Chelles, with its bright cottages, and Montfermeil, with its swarthy hanging woods,

and the horseshoe farther to the south. How often during this month have I looked up at Avron from these spots—at Avron, hostile and dangerous; and now, here I looked down upon them from that very Avron, with its fangs drawn, and not a Frenchman near its summit.

It surprises me much, looking at the abundant evidences of precipitation visible, that the French should have removed all their cannon; and still more so, looking at the evidences of our fire, that they should have been able to do so. It is about as easy to transport a big ship about the country as it is to move a big gun after it has been dismounted; none of the French guns could have been dismounted, else we should have found both gun and carriage where the damage was done. It seems to me that the infantry-men must have skedaddled in a panic, and that the artillery-men, fearing an assault from infantry, which they had no means of resisting, had removed their guns before an absolute necessity existed for evacuation from the strength of the German fire. They were wise, if this was their reckoning.

To-day there is a languid fire going on against Fort Rosny, which is seemingly replying with only two guns. It is believed one of the guns on the batteries of this fort was dismounted yesterday. Noisy will find occasion to spend some ammunition in exchanges presently. The garrison seems paralyzed. There is no sign of a move anywhere. Perhaps they are getting up a surprise for us. It may not be generally known that, on the morning of the 27th, the day we opened our fire, the French asked for a day's armistice. As there appeared no grounds for such a request, and many reasons against granting it, it was refused.

The state of affairs at the southern front, at the close of the year, was thus described by the Correspondent at the headquarters of the King of Prussia, in a letter dated Versailles, December 29:—

“Oldest inhabitants” have been coming out strongly with their memories of winter weather, and the sentries have been well nigh frozen on their midnight duty, and the Seine has been quite frozen from shore to shore. I rode down to Villeneuve St. Georges yesterday morning, and crossed the river upon a bridge of ice. The country was covered with snow as far as the eye could reach, and in the middle of the valley was a strip of smooth white surface, where the ice-blocks had been pressed together into a solid mass. Alas, for the well-built bridge of the German pioneers! It had been swept away and destroyed like so much paper. The pontoons were drawn

aside and saved, but the more permanent structure perished. Never had the invaders believed that they would be followed into France by their own stern climate. Every one stared at the frozen river, and walked upon it, and hammered and stamped upon it, in blank amazement. The rash destruction which the French wrought last September against the bridges of stone and iron seemed to be partially justified when it turned out that pontoons could not remain upon the river. Here was Villeneuve St. Georges reduced to an ice-bridge, whilst the heavy traffic went round by Corbeil. It did not matter much, but it was a point of advantage to those who wish for delay. Of course, the French want delay in all their adversaries' moves. A mile or two more round, a trifle of extra wear and tear for the Prussians, is a gain to the defenders of Paris. Time has been their greatest want, and the fatal accuracy of the invader their greatest danger. But enough of digression about a small *détour* for the waggon trains. There is no difficulty in crossing on foot, or in leading over a saddle-horse; and I hear that a light-built carriage has even been got over by pushing it separately on to the ice, and leading the horses after it one by one. With their usual energy and method, the Germans have marked out a good track upon the river, have laid down planks and straw at the landing points, and put men to watch the state of the ice under the pressure which it now sustains.

I hear from those who have been upon the line of communication with Germany, at Strasburg, at Nancy, and at Châlons, that signs of the active reinforcement of the German armies in France are plentiful. The Landwehr is pouring into the conquered country like a winter torrent. Every station is full of German uniforms, every train is crowded with invaders, until political France seems called upon to give up the ghost. The effort is the strongest effort at complete conquest which Germany can be expected to make. It is the final "spurt" of the race, and it will probably outstrip the best that the French can do. But we see how these obstinate men of the Republic, fighting blindly on, have taxed their powerful enemy to beat them. The mere size and wealth of France has allowed her to call forth resources which her military position since Sedan seemed to paralyze. We can now see what a tough job it would have been to get to Paris, and to besiege it, had a system of French Landwehr existed. Under every disadvantage of political change and military failure, the French have struggled into a fourth month of Republicanism, and struggled very nearly through it to a fifth month, despite fresh defeats without number. If the Garde Mobile were

a force with some years of previous exercise, and the Francs-tireurs were men who had already been obliged to serve in the army, there would be a tolerably even chance for victors and vanquished in the next round of the Franco-Prussian fight. We may take warning by the French. Heaven grant that we may never have occasion to try to make up for ruinous losses, as they are trying to make up, by putting our shoulders to the wheel at the eleventh hour! But, if we do, there will be all the difference in the world between having trained people to recruit from and having trusted to throwing away our lives to set things straight, without any particular training. The Germans who throng the railway lines of Northern France are coming out with an excellent knowledge of their business, whilst the raw French levies that struggle and die to turn the tide are learning how to fight by bitter experience.

You would have thought that both sides, French and German, deserved credit for their tact, had you seen the meeting of the foes at M——'s table, in a little town not far from hence. They met, as has been so often the case of late, the French as prisoners, the Germans, if not as their captors, at least as the aiders and abettors of their captors. A German general was quartered in the house with his staff, and M——, the proprietor, entertained at supper the prisoner officers who were passing his way. It was a delicate position, which the host held admirably well. Of course he must be civil to his courteous but uninvited guests. Of course his every sympathy went with the old uniform, and with the sharp metallic accents of his own mother tongue. What a dreary dictionary full of Teutonic French he had been hearing for weeks past! What a quantity of bad news had been so conveyed to him! The General, a grave, formal man, speaking slowly in German, and still more slowly in French, had become aware of the presence of the prisoners. He asked a few questions about them, and signified by his manner that the host was free to be as hospitable as he chose to these men who were down. The two parties did not eat together, but they passed and exchanged bows, and the greatest care was taken by the victors to show that they recognized the presence of the vanquished. Each party supped by itself. You would have smiled at the strange differences of opinion which the world contains had you heard them talk of their respective opponents; the French thinking it a hard case of invasion that their country should pay for its past folly, the Germans gravely and sincerely blaming the obstinacy which brought these luckless enemies to wage a hopeless war: each side

resolved as to its own right, and each resolved not to be backward in outward courtesy to the other.

The cold weather and the skating will long be remembered at Versailles. There is a distant boom of guns in the frosty air, but the park near the lake is as lively as though no siege were thought of. Skates are let out by the hour, and so are sledges.

The loss of Avron was the first unequivocal sign to the Parisians that the attack of the enemy was stronger than their own defence. The Special Correspondent at Paris wrote on the 29th of December, the day after the plateau of Avron was evacuated :—

On the 27th of this month, exactly four weeks after the plateau of Avron had been occupied by the French, the Prussians attacked it with their heavy guns, in order to clear it. They spent a great deal of powder on this first day, and produced a very small result, as their shot and shell fell wild. On the second day they resumed their attack with diminished vivacity, but the aim of their projectiles was truer, and although little damage was done, yet it was demonstrated that it would be impossible to hold the plateau in face of the Prussian batteries. That same night, therefore, the guns were all removed—the plateau of Avron was vacated, and, as a consequence, whatever advantages accrued from the two great sorties of the 30th of November and the 21st of December were nullified. It is impossible to deny that the effect of this event on Paris was depressing in the extreme, but it was still more so by reason of the terms in which it was announced officially. We are told in one sentence that the employment of the heavy siege artillery of the Prussians must modify the system of defence. “But,” it is added complacently, “all has been foreseen from the commencement of the siege.” It is certainly a pity that, if everything has been foreseen, General Trochu should throw away his strength in unavailing efforts, and should talk so bravely of attempts which all end in failure. There is a strong under-current of feeling rising against him just now on account of his indecision and many delays. What he wants is daring. He is a very able, honest man; but Paris wants for its deliverer something more than a man—a hero; if he were godlike, so much the better; but it would probably suffice if he had daring enough. As it is, we may now conclude that he will no more attempt to act on the offensive. From the first, indeed, his plan, of which we have heard so much, was entirely defensive. He did not originally intend to take the offensive. It was enough for

him to render Paris impregnable, and in this he has perfectly succeeded. Paris rendered impregnable, and able to resist famine for four or five months—he would wait for the chapter of accidents. Who could tell what might not happen? What victories might not be gained by French armies in the provinces? What relief might not come from foreign intervention? He was driven out of this temporizing policy towards the end of October, partly by popular disgust, partly by the urgency of friends who wished him well. He began to prepare the means of attack, and at last, after interminable delays, he made an attack—he made two great attacks—on the lines of the enemy. Both ended in failure, and I doubt if he will attack again unless he is driven to it by an overwhelming expression of public opinion. He will prefer to resist as he can the attacks of the enemy, and to wait for the chances of relief from General Chanzy. Fabius Cunctator was a great man, and succeeded at last in saving Rome; but his policy is certainly hazardous, and it approaches too nearly to that of a military Micawber to inspire much confidence, especially now, when we have barely five weeks before us. Still, there is no use in despairing. If the Micawber policy is bad, the worst of all policies is that of despair; and whether General Trochu mounts his horse for renewed attacks, or twirls his thumbs waiting for help which never comes, Paris will endure to the uttermost.

It is right to tell, however, that Paris showed the first signs of unruly behaviour the other day—I mean of such unruly behaviour as proceeds from physical distress, and leads to dangerous riot. The riot of the 31st of October, though in its way sufficiently serious, yet proceeding from mere difference of opinion, was comparatively harmless, and it was quickly subdued, leaving no trace of ill-will behind. Let a riot proceed from intense physical suffering and the sense of wrong, however, and there is no saying what may happen. Such a disturbance we had the other day in the intense cold. But I must say that I sympathized a good deal with the rioters. The people of Paris suffer much, but they suffer cheerfully as long as they know that their hard fate is inevitable, and that the Government is doing all it can for their relief. Indeed, this cheerfulness is very wonderful considering the mismanagement of the commissariat in nearly every one of the arrondissements of Paris. Suddenly came the intense cold—the people were in fearful misery—there was a panic among the wood merchants—the price of fuel rose immensely. The Government had to announce one cold morning that it had not counted on the cold; that it had

made no provision of fuel; but that it would make amends by at once proceeding to cut down the woods of Boulogne and Vincennes, and the trees on the Boulevards. On this announcement the people argued after their own fashion. For them there was no time to be lost, and they knew that it takes a long time to organize a Government scheme. The Government probably could not supply them with wood for a week to come. But in the meantime they were starving. How could they wait for a week until the Government could leisurely carry out its plans? They would do for themselves the work of the Government. So they went forth in all directions to cut down trees, and to pick up sticks. They made no distinction between public and private property. Here they saw a fine tree, which would blaze beautifully; they sawed it down. There were some tempting palings, where the wood seemed dry and cut to size; they pulled these up, and carried them off. Behold an enclosure, walled round with planks and hoardings, on which flourished many advertisements; what could be better for firewood? The poor starving wretches pulled them to pieces, with a sagacity which, if you sympathize with it, you will call practical; and if you have no pity, you will call criminal. Property, no doubt, has its rights; but these are very elastic just now in Paris, in so far as they regard the necessities of life. In fact, as regards these necessities, the sole right of property in them belongs to the Government, which has made requisition of everything edible and everything combustible in Paris. If you have money, keep it—it is yours; but if you have a horse that can be eaten, or coals that can be burned, you can no longer keep possession of such valuables. The State will pay you for them, but you must give them up for general distribution. So in Paris we have a restricted communism in full working order; and the poor people, fully appreciating this communism, did not see much harm in seizing upon trees which did not belong to them, and on palings and beautiful trelliswork which they had not paid for, to light themselves fires wherewithal, and to keep themselves from freezing. Of course, the bereft proprietors are indignant at their losses; and political economists and moralists, who recognize no distinction between a state of siege and a state of freedom, are lavish in sermons on the rights of property and the wickedness of the people. All in vain. By all the rights of logic, the people ought to have died of cold, waiting until, after a week or ten days, the Government could be in a position to dole out fuel to them. Human nature discovers that it is above such logic, as there

have been Emperors above grammar. If Paris in the siege had been left to the political economists, I sometimes wonder what would have happened. There was a sect of free-traders who insisted on free-trade—the inexorable law of supply and demand. They could not see that free-trade implies freedom of many kinds. No, they said, free-trade is good under all possible conditions; this system of rations is not right; let every man keep his property, and sell it as he pleases. If he has an ox, and chooses to sell it at the rate of 100 francs a pound—good: he has a right to do so; let him make his profit; that is his reward for laying up a store against the evil day. These theories are all very fine, but they evaporate before the starvation of two millions of people. Certainly Paris could not have held out as it has but for the modified communism to which the Government gave its sanction in seizing upon all eatables and combustibles in order to distribute them in rations.

In the midst of the firing nine people sat down to breakfast in a small house upon the plateau of Avron. There were the commander of the 6th Battalion of Mobiles of the Seine (M. Heintzler), his wife, the adjutant of the battalion, a captain, two lieutenants, an ensign, a chaplain, and a doctor—nearly all of the same battalion. A Prussian shell came smashing upon the table and killed six of the party. The commandant and his wife were wounded. The only one who escaped unhurt was the doctor. Of the eight persons who were killed yesterday, six belonged to this little breakfast party. What an incident for the future novelist! Nine persons, including a lady, are jesting over their frugal breakfast, which they are determined to enjoy, in spite of the cannon. “There wants but a shell to give us butter,” says one of the party. Instantly comes a shell, and blows six of them out of existence, while wounding two more, the commandant and his wife.

The Germans were by no means disposed to stop at their success against Mont Avron. The forts on that side of Paris—Nogent, Rosny, and Noisy—were to be demolished, if the German artillery was equal to the task. Their fire, in fact, soon ceased, after they had been vigorously bombarded, and the telegrams from Versailles showed that the besiegers believed they were effectually silenced. But their brief inactivity was deceptive, and after an interval of repose, the reason of which was much discussed at the German head-quarters, their fire awoke in all its original vigour. The bombardment of the forts in the north-east front of Paris began on the 27th of December,

and that of the southern forts—Issy, Vanves, Montrouge, with the entrenchments of Villejuif and Pont du Jour—on the 5th of January. The Special Correspondent in Paris wrote on the 1st of January :—

One of the German correspondents of the press, describing how Paris was to be reduced, gives great prominence to what he calls the psychological moment. It was discovered, he said, by the German leaders, that a bombardment could produce but small physical effect, and therefore it was considered best to defer it until the Parisian mind, being shaken by misery, famine, sickness, and despair, was susceptible of the strongest psychological effect. It would appear that now, in the opinion of the Germans, the psychological moment has come—the moment when it is likely that the mind of the Parisians must be peculiarly open to impressions from a bombardment which could effect little by main force. At least this might be inferred from the terms in which the Government describes the first cannonade which the enemy has opened on the forts of Paris. But, then, I am nothing but what is called here a *pekin*—that is, a civilian, as distinct from a military man ; and to read the military report of the Government, as well as the descriptions in all the newspapers, you would imagine that it is the long-expected bombardment of Paris, which has commenced with a cannonade upon the forts of the east. Suppose the view announced by the Government and all the papers be correct, it follows that, as a bombardment on this side can do no harm whatever to Paris, it can only have a moral effect. But if the enemy have aimed at moral effect, they have been woefully at fault in their calculations. The bombardment, if so it is to be called, has put the Parisians in great good spirits. “ It is a sign of disquietude and impatience on the part of the Prussians,” they say. “ The siege lasts longer than they expected ; they are tired of it ; they want to finish ; it is necessary that they should finish soon ; let us wait a little longer, and they will have to raise the siege.” So it was when General Moltke sent in word that the Army of the Loire was defeated. He no doubt expected to drive Paris to despair, and to the point of surrender. On the contrary, he raised the courage of Paris, and we now know that, though the French armies in the provinces were defeated, they made a stout resistance, and succumbed under circumstances which give a good hope of better luck for renewed efforts. On Christmas Day the German leaders made another psychological attempt, which, so far from damping the spirits of the Parisians, has set them chuckling with glee. One of the generals sent in a

long letter, ostensibly to arrange for the exchange of prisoners, and particularly to inquire as to the fate of a certain John Müller. But this elaborate epistle, so full of anxiety for the welfare of Mr. John Müller, contained the announcement, introduced with a clumsy emphasis, of the defeat of a French army at Amiens. It is a great pity that a French army should be defeated at Amiens, but it is a consolation to the Parisian that the Germans should be so anxious to let us know of it that they must stumble into so much clumsiness. And now comes the bombardment, so called, which has upon the Parisian mind the best possible psychological effect.

It is a wonderfully happy faculty—this of cheerfulness and sublime conceit. I neither praise it nor blame it, recognizing fully that it is a characteristic not of French alone, but also of human nature. It is a terrible weakness, and it is a tower of strength. The French used to laugh at us in the Napoleonic wars because our regiments never knew when they were beaten, and went on fighting. But they also did justice to our tenacity. “C’est magnifique,” they said, “mais ce n’est pas la guerre.” And we may say to all their cheerfulness and tenacity in the midst of disaster much the same. It is not reasonable—it is mere conceit; but still it is very fine.

Paris, Jan. 3.—The forts on the eastern side of Paris are being bombarded, but as yet with very small result, whether in loss of life or in destruction of stone walls. On the other hand the army of Paris has been singularly inactive, to the great disgust of the inhabitants, who are willing to endure any amount of privation, provided the generals in command will do their duty, and show signs of life. General Trochu has received a great deal of praise, and he deserves it; but he lacks initiative, and he has to be driven on. He will, however, be compelled to fight, for whether he can succeed in his attempts or not, it is recognized here that, in the interest of the armies in the provinces, Paris is bound to keep the army of investment fully engaged. Sorties in succession may not end in victory, but they may at least attain this good result—to inflict severe losses on the enemy, and to keep him fixed about Paris.

In the meantime, it must be confessed that Paris is in great suffering. I have no scruple in telling you this, which might seem to give hopes to the enemy of a speedy surrender, because I have no doubt whatever as to the fortitude of the people, who are indeed ready to hold out to the last crust of bread. The patriotism of the Parisians is unflinching. Whatever murmurs we may hear—whatever complaints against the Government—there is no thought of surrender among those who have the best right to complain. Therefore, in all frankness, I give you

the death list for the last week, namely, that ending December 31:—Small-pox, 454; scarlatina, 6; measles, 19; typhoid fever, 250; erysipelas, 10; bronchitis, 258; pneumonia, 201; diarrhœa, 98; dysentery, 51; diphtheria, 12; croup, 16; puerperal affections, 8; other causes, 1,897—total, 3,280.

This is a fearful total, and shows an increase of 550 deaths over the lists of the two previous weeks. Small-pox, typhoid fever, bronchitis, and pneumonia are enormously increased in fatal effect. And it ought to be observed that the weekly bills of mortality do not by any means show the total mortality of Paris. The weekly bills never take account of public institutions. There is an arrangement here by means of which the mortality in the public hospitals is registered once a quarter. So it happens that we know nothing of the deaths in the ambulances, and in other public institutions. The weekly bills take account only of deaths in private houses, and they present a terrible total. What is to be added for the hospitals, ordinary and military, I do not know; but considering that hospital fever is raging, and that the mortality of the surgical cases is enormous, I cannot be far wrong if I put the total mortality of Paris in this last week at 4,000. Consider what this is in a population of 2,005,709, which is the latest reckoning, that is, a reckoning ascertained by our daily rations.

When 4,000 people die in a week out of a population of 2,000,000, this implies, if the same rate of mortality were to continue all the year round, decimation. A district in England is considered tolerably healthy if only 2 per cent. of the population die in a year. A district is very unhealthy if the death-rate mounts up to 5 per cent. The present death-rate of Paris, if it were sustained throughout the year, would give 10 per cent. Or, to put it otherwise, it is considered an excessive mortality in England if death takes 1 in 1,000 persons in a week. Here death takes 2 in 1,000.

In spite of the bad food, it is satisfactory to note that mortality from diseases of the alimentary system is not by any means what one might have expected. The great minister of evil is the extraordinary cold, which is even more remarkable for continuance than for intensity. Of the one-and-thirty days of this last December only nine have shown a temperature above the freezing point. In the fifty years from 1816 to 1866 the average temperature for the month of December has been 3·54 deg. above zero on the Centigrade thermometer, which is something like 38 on the Fahrenheit scale. The average temperature of this last December has been 1·07 deg. below zero on the Centigrade thermometer, which is very nearly two degrees below the freezing point on the Fahrenheit.

Jan. 6.—Of all the privations of the siege none has been more hard to endure than the want of news. No pigeon has come into Paris since the 19th December, and the news it bore was dated the 14th. We get news, however, notwithstanding. Sometimes a bottle comes down the Seine, but it generally contains information more interesting than important. Interesting! I confess I am interested in the news that Monsieur Prudhomme's eldest child has got the hooping-cough, and that the black sow has had a litter of fifteen. It is interesting to be thus able to take the measure of human events. There is all Paris in a great agony, and wild with expectation over the bottle, and Paris is informed with all solemnity that a poor farmer's sow has farrowed fifteen. We think much of ourselves here—we feel all the agony of the situation; and we find not a thought of our agony in that precious bottle which is all devoted to a record of the travail of a black sow. We have another source of information in the English papers which come in now and then, but it is difficult to get a sight of them, and the news rather oozes out than is fairly published. Finally, we have the German papers which are found on prisoners. General Ducrot said, three days ago, to an officer of the *Eclaireurs de la Seine*, "We want news, go and bag a few prisoners."—"How many do you want, my General?" says Major Poulizac.—"As many as you like," replies Ducrot; "get me some newspapers." Forth go the sportsmen to hunt for newspapers. At four in the morning they surprise one of the outposts of the Prussian army in the neighbourhood of Bourget. The post is held by forty Prussians, but, taken by surprise, ten are killed and six made prisoners. The rest escape, but their baggage is seized, and we have newspapers from Germany and from Versailles up to New Year's Day. So it is that we get supplied with news—other than of black sows. When we want a newspaper we shoot a man—we shoot ten men dead, we wound others, and take six prisoners.

Thinking of the black sow, and how all-important she and her fifteen sucking pigs must be to the poor French farmer, I went to the Pantheon yesterday, and to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont. The Pantheon is by rights the Church of Sainte-Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris, and all who wish to call upon this saint for succour flock thither, and to the neighbouring Church of St. Etienne du Mont, where she has a chapel. The 3rd of January is devoted in the calendar to Sainte-Genevieve, and on this day accordingly begins her accustomed *neuvaine*—that is, the nine days of prayer addressed to her. To her holy shrine all true believers flock to pray for Paris in this her time of need. The churches are filled with anxious

creatures, who are down upon their knees to the blessed saint. "Oh, Sainte-Genevieve of Paris," they pray, "our good patroness, protect us! Sainte-Genevieve of Paris, our salvation and our guardian, have pity upon us! Oh, Sainte-Genevieve of Paris, thou that with thy prayers didst save our city from the hordes of Attila, save us now from the hordes of his descendants!" While the people are still praying, we can hear the noise of a shell bursting close at hand. The bombardment of Paris, or something that looks like bombardment, has commenced. Strange irony! We are on the rack for news from the French provinces, and the only news which a Frenchman takes the trouble to send in to us concerns the fertility of his black sow. On the third day of the year the people rush to the special churches of Paris to pray to the patron saint of the city. Does the blessed Genevieve hear? If she does, at least she does not avert the German cannon! for on the fifth day of the year the shells begin to fall upon the devoted city. The formidable Prussian batteries on the south opened yesterday on the forts of Issy, Vanves, and Montrouge, and, in a degree, also assailed the portion of Paris on the left bank of the Seine. The practical results of the cannonade are small enough; but the attack was very violent, and the roar was terrific. The Prussian shells are of great size—many of them twenty-two inches in length. But their effect is so little in comparison to their power and to their detonation that many people cannot help believing the cannonade to be a mere feint, to mask some other movement—perhaps to conceal the withdrawal of troops from Paris. If, as we gather from the German papers, it was intended to have a psychological effect, the result would certainly not be regarded by the enemy as satisfactory. When the Parisians recovered their first shock of surprise at the bombardment, they regarded it very much as they would an exhibition of fireworks. They gathered to every high place and coign of vantage where they could see the pyrotechnical display, and watched with curious interest for every flash and every explosion. With a difference, however. Whenever a bomb came suspiciously near, they fell flat on their faces with a ludicrous unanimity. The Parisians are wonderfully obedient to rules and recipes. For every situation in life they have a recipe. And as they have been informed that when a shell bursts upon them, the best chance of escape is to fall flat upon their bellies, down they go whenever there appears the slightest symptom of danger. Nothing can be more laughable. You hear, or you fancy that you hear, a whiz in the air. Instantly the Parisians—men and women—pick out the cleanest places and sprawl on the ground. Of course

they will learn ere long to be less eager to fall down; but when one first begins to obey a rule, one takes it in its widest sense and follows it absolutely. When the people are more accustomed to the shells, they will learn to distinguish the cases where the rule is absolutely necessary and where it is superfluous. For the present, they are all obedience within range of the shells, and kiss the earth with an alacrity which will no doubt be most effectively reproduced in the comedies, farces, and burlesques of many years to come.

Perhaps if the Prussians had begun by bombarding the south of Paris, and the forts to the south, people might have been more ready to believe in their serious intention of reducing the city by this means. But they began by expending an enormous weight of shot and shell on the forts of the east at a very long range, where the cannonade was a sheer waste of munitions. It is calculated that from the 27th of December to the 1st of January 25,000 projectiles were hurled upon the forts of the east—Noisy, Rosny, and Nogent. Men who have been present at Sebastopol and at Charleston in the days of the most furious bombardment, declare that never have they seen anything so hot as the attack upon the forts. Yet the whole eight days of attack upon them have produced but 100 wounded and 30 killed, while the effect upon the walls has been almost imperceptible. It could scarcely be otherwise, considering the distance of the Prussian batteries on that side. They are established at Raincy, Gagny, and Noisy-le-Grand. The batteries at Raincy, the most powerful of any, are 4,100 mètres from the fort of Rosny, 5,300 from that of Noisy, 6,000 from that of Nogent. The other batteries are still more distant. At these ranges the most powerful projectiles have but a feeble effect on the works; and there is such a lapse of time between the flash of the gun and the arrival of its missile, that men have plenty of time to get under cover. On the whole, the cannonade—much mooted and long expected—has hitherto turned out a failure. The noise is tremendous, and the expenditure must be enormous, but the results are as good an illustration as one could find of the old story of the mountain and the mouse. M. Bismarck, in one of his circulars, talks of the waste of munitions of the forts of Paris in their continual firing. People here could not understand it, and would not believe it. They may understand it and believe it now, seeing how comparatively ineffective has been the prodigious cannonade opened on the south of Paris—ineffective, I mean, of course, upon the forts, for Paris itself has not yet been seriously bombarded. Perhaps fifty shells have burst upon the left bank

of the Seine, some breaking as far as the garden of the Luxembourg. But probably a number of these were mere trial shots, others may have been the result of mistake, and a very few may have been sent by way of warning. Paris is warned, but still Paris will not give in, and its only fear is that General Trochu—since he can do so little—may contemplate a surrender. The General has to proclaim, as he does to-night on all the walls, that the people must not be misled by the demagogues who denounce him as a traitor, for he will not capitulate. “The Governor of Paris will not capitulate:” these are his words. But the Parisian, who is one of the most suspicious creatures in the world, asks—“Why does he say that the Governor will not capitulate? Why not say that Paris will not capitulate? Does he mean that he personally will not sign a surrender, but will leave that duty to others?” Of course this is hypercriticism, but it shows the anxiety of the people to resist to the uttermost. They will resist far longer than any one could have supposed. When I last wrote to you on this subject, I stated that Paris could hold out certainly to the 1st of February, and probably for a longer period. But I think I may now say with tolerable certainty that Paris is good for the 1st of March. It is beyond all expectation, and I confess I am surprised—but it is no more than members of the Government have again and again predicted in my hearing for many weeks past. I acknowledge to have had my doubts. I thought they were too sanguine, and I have been anxious to understate the truth. But now, what do I find? It is the 6th of January—that is, exactly a fortnight from the farthest day, the 20th of January, to which the croakers assert, with a dogmatism which shuts up all discussion, that the endurance of Paris can extend. I go to men who ought to be the best informed in Paris. I cannot mention names—but they ought to know. I say to them, “How long? I am told that the 20th of January is your last day: you must surrender. Tell me truly.” The reply is, “I tell you truly, we can stand out till March.”—“And there is no chance of a capitulation in the present month?”—“Not the least in the world from famine. We are badly off, but we can endure. Who is it that gives you the 20th of January as the last day?”—“I cannot tell you; but I do not mind telling you this—that those who put your last day at the 20th of January declare that if you can hold out till March, the Prussians will be knocked up as high as a kite.” He replied, “It is perfectly certain that we can hold out till March. I have always told you so. We can go well into March. But say the 1st of March; it is enough.” The

news seems almost too good to be true; but I will state to you privately my authority, and you can judge for yourself as to its credibility.

In conclusion, let me mention that the thaw has commenced. To-day has been a lovely winter's day—almost warm. The poor wounded soldiers hobble out on crutches from the ambulances to take a breath of fresh air, and, watching the play of the shells bursting upon Paris and upon the forts, I was able to sit for an hour upon a bench, oblivious of the season, which has been deadly cold.

Jan. 8.—A pigeon has come into Paris to-night with a number of despatches. These despatches bear the mark 43, and as those which last reached us bore the number 36, it is evident that six intermediate despatches are missing. We shall not know the news till to-morrow, but I am told it is excellent.

The bombardment still goes on, but with an effect—moral and physical—so small that any description of it would sound almost like bravado. That there have been deaths, and that there has been destruction, it is impossible to deny: and death and destruction are always terrible to witness. But for the object which the Prussians have in view, the prodigious cannonade with which Paris has been visited might as well have been a salvo of champagne bottles. The only practical result of the bombardment which I can find is one jest the more for the little boys of Paris. When they see a man or a woman particularly well dressed—say a man glorious in furs, that argue an extraordinary care of his person, they cry out, “Flat, flat! a shell—a shell—*à plat ventre!* Down on your faces.” The man, gorgeous in fur, falls flat on the ground—perhaps in the gutter—and the Parisian urchin rejoices with exceeding great joy. The effect of the fire even on the fort of Vanves, which has had to bear the chief assault, has been insignificant as yet. In Paris, on the south bank of the Seine, we can draw a line like that which we see in maps of physical geography, where we are told that here is the line which limits the cultivation of the vine, and here the line beyond which is not heard the song of the nightingale. It is the extreme line to which the Prussian shells have carried. They have burst upon the gardens of the Luxembourg, upon the Invalides, upon the Observatory, upon the boulevard and street which take their name from the hottest of all hot places—the Boulevard d’Enfer. But most of all they seem to converge upon the Pantheon, for it appears that the Prussians have an idea that here is a powder magazine. There is not a grain of

powder in the Pantheon—only hundreds of women and scores of men praying to Sainte-Geneviève to save Paris—though the blessed virgin of Nanterre seems to hear them not. This quarter of the town begins to be deserted, for it is dangerous. A cantinière is in her bed, sound asleep, and dreaming doubtless of her gallant regiment; a shell kills her in her sleep. A dozen people are drinking in a cabaret; a shell comes to scatter them. A mother is sitting at table with her two daughters; a shell smashes into the room, but does them no harm. In a house hard by it bursts on two babies in their cradles; the mother rushes in terror-stricken, and swoons with joy to find that her babes are unhurt. In one of the houses some soldiers are cooking their dinner; a shell comes tumbling into the pot, and the dinner is dissipated, but the soldiers are untouched. In another house a celebrated painter is working at his easel; a shell plunges into his studio, destroys his pictures, but does him no bodily harm. A cab jogs along the streets in the lazy fashion peculiar to French cabs. It contains two ladies, and if the coachman had been a little more active, it need not now be recorded that one was killed and the other only frightened. Frightened! People may well be frightened at such personal experiences; but Paris, nevertheless, is comparatively indifferent, and the psychological moment is not come, nor is it at hand. So much life has been destroyed that a few lives more or less can make no great difference; and so much property—valuable property—has suffered destruction around Paris that more waste and destruction can produce little effect. We have become seasoned to suffering—hardened; and, like the dyer's hand, subdued to what it works in.

Jan. 10.—At last the news has come, and it turns out to be good. The despatch bears date the 4th January, and brings news of the victory of Faidherbe at Bapaume, on the 3rd. No need to say that Paris rejoices in the good news; but at the same time, perhaps, never before has Paris been seen to take good news so quietly. Paris is not elated. Only a few weeks ago, and news much less encouraging would have sent the capital raving mad, and would have rendered every Frenchman perfectly unbearable. But now much suffering and many changes of fortune have rendered the Parisian comparatively quiet, and if not indifferent, yet undemonstrative. I told you how, in the last days of December, the German generals sent into Paris a very clumsy intimation of the defeat of a portion of Faidherbe's army, which they announced as a defeat of the whole. I see it stated in the German papers that Paris was in consequence very much depressed. But nothing can be farther

from the truth. The wish of the German reporters was father to the thought. Paris took the bad news very gently, and was mightily amused at the clumsy eagerness of the German generals to make it known. And now, when good news comes, there is a similar want of excitement. Partly this want of excitement is to be explained by the fact that the Frenchman never loses faith in France. He is perfectly certain that France cannot be conquered. When victory will come to his country he is not now so sure as he was; but that victory is certain he never for a moment doubts. When, therefore, he hears of Faidherbe's success in the north, and of other successes in the south and the west, he is not much excited, because it may be that victory is not so near at hand as he used to suppose. He has been many times disappointed; but that victory is coming is to him as certain as that to-morrow the sun will rise, and he begins to think that perhaps he need not be more excited about victory than he would be about the rising of the sun.

But the Parisian is an inquisitive, curious animal, and he puzzles over the date of the fight with Faidherbe. The battle of Bapaume was fought on the 3rd of January, and the bombardment of Paris commenced on the 5th. The Parisian puts these two dates together, and finds in the one a cause of the other. It is impossible for us to say here whether or not he is mistaken—but certainly the bombardment of Paris at this time of day looks very like precipitation. If the German leaders abstained so long from bombarding the city, why can they not abstain to the end? What possible result beyond wanton destruction can the bombardment now produce? Every man who has been killed by a shell must have cost the Prussians more than his weight in gold—considering the number of shells they have fired—and it is not worth their while to carry on such a game. For moral effect it is nought. Punch goes his round in the threatened streets the same as ever, and the little children gather round him to see his enormities, and to laugh at his unearthly voice. Is Punch changed? Yes, I am afraid he is in one respect changed. Toby is no more; Toby has been eaten. In some establishments Punch has a cat instead of a dog; and, sad to tell, the cat also has disappeared. The cat has either been promoted to rabbit, and has been consumed in a savoury stew; or it has soared into the altitudes of fowl, and has been presented to mankind as *galantine de volaille*. Punch, wanting his dog and his cat, is certainly changed, but he is not changed through fear of shot and shell. Give my compliments to Mr. Punch in Fleet Street, and tell him that his namesake in Paris has had the misfortune

to have lost his dog Toby—in plain English, he has eaten him ; but he goes about unmindful of the Prussian shells with a courage which is worthy of the family. If Mr. Shirley Brooks or Mr. Tenniel, to whom all Englishmen in Paris send greeting, wish to give a true picture of our besieged city, let them depict Monsieur Punch, in the rig of a Frenchman, going the round of the streets and exhibiting the exploits of the most famous of men, regardless of bomb and shell.

There is another point of view, however, from which the news is interesting to many Parisians, and I dare say that, though you are not Catholics, you can to a large extent sympathize with a genuine religious feeling. Faidherbe's victory was won on the 3rd of January. Now that is the feast day of Sainte-Genevieve of Paris—the day when her *neuvaines*, or nine days' worship, commenced. I am no Catholic, but I confess to be intensely interested in every form of religious belief ; and I go nearly every day just now to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont, behind the Pantheon, to see the people kneeling at the shrine of Genevieve, and praying for Paris. It is a wonderful sight—with, however, a great drawback. The church is surrounded with beggars. Such a crowd of beggars I will be bound you never saw in your life. It is very difficult to know what to do with them, and very painful too ; for it is assumed by the crowd that if you have alms for a few, you have alms for all, and the more you give, the more you are expected to give. It is a dreadful persecution that tears one to pieces, for the suffering among the poor creatures is palpable. You go into the church, and you see lighted with candles the shrine of the virgin Genevieve, who has usurped the Church of St. Stephen of the Mount. What an illumination it is ! and the poor devotees come with their prayers and their offerings to the shrine of the virgin who protects Paris and all the villages around. The villages around are eager to inscribe their names on banners around her altar. The worshippers bend low and chant the litanies. What is very curious about these prayers is this, that they began on the day of Faidherbe's victory, the 3rd of January. The sceptics scoffed when the nine days' prayer commenced, because two days afterwards came the bombardment ; now the religious have their triumph. They say, "Behold ! while we prayed, Faidherbe had his triumph in the North."

Only one thing more of importance, viz., that the death-rate in Paris is on the increase. I give you the list. What is to be added for the hospitals and ambulances I do not know, but at random suspect that a fifth should be added.

	Week from 18th to 24th Dec.	Week from 25th to 31st Dec.	Week from 1st to 6th Jan.
Small-pox	388	454	329
Scarlet fever.....	11	6	13
Measles	19	19	31
Typhoid fever	221	250	251
Erysipelas	14	10	9
Bronchitis	172	258	343
Pneumonia	147	201	262
Diarrhœa	73	98	151
Dysentery	30	51	52
Cholera	3	0	3
Diphtheria.....	6	12	19
Croup	11	16	20
Puerperal affections	6	8	11
Other causes.....	1627	1897	2186
Total of deaths.....	2728	3280	3680

Jan. 11.—The pigeon which arrived on Sunday brought in an immense mass of matter, which requires answer, and it has taken nearly two days to decipher all its messages. It brought in despatches for the Government, which, when printed, filled three or four columns of the newspapers; and, in addition, it has been the bearer of no less than 15,000 messages for private individuals. All this vast array of news has been reduced to microscopic size, and conveyed in a very small quill delicately attached to one of the bird's feathers. If the Parisians were capable of worshipping anything, they would henceforth worship the pigeon, and vow that never more should a dove be eaten in France, unless in imitation of those unholy nations who eat their gods. Certainly never has a pigeon entered into a town bringing glad tidings to more people than the one which arrived on Sunday. If Paris needed to be comforted, in consequence of the psychological effects of the bombardment, the bird of good omen brought news which would far more than compensate for any depression produced by the Prussian shells.

The shelling of the forts is a very farce. An officer of the *Francs-tireurs*, who appears to have had nothing else to do, took the trouble to count the shells at Courneuve on Sunday last. He counted 2,081. The result was not a man killed and not a man wounded. There is a tradition in the British army that, in the old days of Brown Bess, to kill one man took a man's weight in lead expended in shot. Weigh these 2,081 shells, and think of the waste of strength ending in no result whatever. It is

not, indeed, to be supposed that the result is nothing on all sides. The shells falling on the south side of Paris have produced a number of wounds, and not a few deaths. Six children, the night before last, were killed in their little beds. And the wounded in the Hospital of Val de Grâce, and in other hospitals, have suffered a good deal. But what is the real effect of such wanton destruction? Does it make Paris more accessible to the enemy? Does it make the population quail? It would be impossible for any people in the world to take the bombardment of their chief city more coolly. They look on as at a spectacle provided for their entertainment, and they pick up the exploded shells to stow them away in their cabinets of curiosities. I went again yesterday to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont—that is, by rights, the Church of Sainte-Genevieve of Paris, which is full of devotees praying to the patron saint of Paris for salvation. The prayers began on the 3rd of the present month, and will continue till the 12th. There was a grand illumination of candles; the worshippers were on their knees in earnest supplication—"Holy Sainte-Genevieve, pray for us!" Suddenly a shell burst upon the church with a tremendous detonation. I could not help giving a start; but the worshippers seemed to be unmoved, and the chanting of the litany to the Lady Genevieve, who had saved Paris in days of yore from the hosts of Attila, went on with imperturbable smoothness. The only strong feeling which the bombardment excites is indignation. What possible good can it do? If the King of Prussia and his Ministers imagine that the deaths of a few women in the streets and children in their beds will make the Parisians shake in their shoes, they have made a superlative mistake. They only embitter the war, which had been made bitter enough already by the high-handed exactions of the conqueror. Certainly the King who affects to represent the most enlightened, the most highly-educated people in the world, assumes a tremendous responsibility in the face of civilization and before the tribunal of history, when he ventures on such a purposeless bombardment. I am not exaggerating when I say that it is the most violent, and at the same time the most stupid and unjustifiable, bombardment ever yet attempted. I am willing to allow of any excuse for it that will show the slightest good which it can do to the German side. We are told that all war is wanton waste; but there never, probably, was such wanton waste as the bombardment which is now proceeding with all the fury of hell let loose. It is such a waste of ammunition that people here argue that the Germans are preparing to leave Paris, and have collected

such stores of shot and shell, which can never be carried back to Germany, that they think it best to try the chances of dropping some of them upon the detestable city which they uncharitably call Gomorrah, as a souvenir of their affection. And it is such a wanton destruction of the most precious monuments of Paris—not to speak of human lives—that M. Jules Favre has deemed it right to address a protest to all the diplomatic agents of the French Government abroad, which will, no doubt, be written with all his eloquence. But it needs no eloquence beyond that of facts to prove to every Court in Europe the barbarity of such a bombardment as we are now undergoing. The Prussian shells are falling in the gardens of the Cluny Museum. It may be that hereafter these shells may figure on the tables of the Museum for centuries as a witness to the vanity of human wishes, as well as to the barbarity of the present bombardment.

No courier from London to-day. The American Minister generally receives his bag of letters every Tuesday morning. He is allowed to send a *parlementaire* to the bridge at Sèvres with his despatches for London, and at the same time he receives his letters from abroad. But to-day Mr. Washburne was informed that, "for military reasons," the usual messenger with the white flag could not be allowed to go to the bridge at Sèvres; and so he has neither received any letters nor sent any out. What the military reasons are which forbid the passage of a courier between the lines, I cannot pretend to guess, but the stoppage of the courier is a grief to not a few of us; because, although the American Minister is strictly faithful to an engagement which he made with Count Bismarck not to publish the news which he receives from London, he sometimes feels himself at liberty to give his English and American friends private news of their families outside. There were advices for some of us in the advertisements of the *Times*. The latest English paper which has reached here is dated the 23rd of December. But we have German papers to the 3rd and 4th of January. I think I told you in a previous letter how they are obtained. Whenever news is wanted, the order is given to go out and bag a few prisoners. A band go forth—a tidy hunting party—who bag from ten to twenty prisoners; and so we get news.

I told you the other day that a bottle came down the Seine bringing us the unimportant intelligence that a certain farmer's black sow had farrowed fifteen. Another bottle has come down the Marne announcing the death of Prince Frederick Charles; but I doubt if anybody believes the story.

Jan. 15.—The spy fever has begun to rage again with a very

vigorous flame. Partly this is due to real discoveries, but partly also to the natural anxieties of a people who are coming to the end of their resources; who find that they can do nothing but wait; and who are troubled—overtroubled—lest the defence of Paris should be endangered by the slightest neglect. As in eating their black bread just now the Parisians carefully gather up the crumbs so that not a fragment may be lost; as the entrails of fowls have become a precious commodity in the markets; as the bones of horses are boiled down for soup and for a gelatinous dainty which is called osseins; and as a number of journals here, with the most awful gravity, refuse to state where the shells of the Prussians have fallen on their city, but tell mysteriously of the disasters which have happened to houses in Street M—— and Street N——; so, more than ever, the people are on their guard against treason, and are disposed to find a spy in every lounge. Add to this, that they are every day more and more impressed with the ingenuity of their German foe; the skill of all his arrangements; the fertility and novelty of his resources. The French hate the Germans with a terrible hatred; they are exasperated beyond measure at the manner in which the Germans have conducted the war in France; but being themselves an ingenious people, they are mightily struck with the ingenuities of the enemy. Thus, there is a Prussian battery at Breteuil, which for a time received the fire of Mont Valérien without any apparent effect, much to the astonishment of the gunners in the fort. They were extremely puzzled, and sought the point of attack with double care. Then they discovered the cause of their failure. It seems that the Prussians flashed powder at some distance from the embrasures of their battery, and thus contrived to misdirect for some time the heavy fire of Mont Valérien. Then there is another contrivance of the Prussians which has taken the fancy of the French. It is that their sentinels wear white cloaks when they stand against walls, green ones when they appear in the fields, brown ones for the woods, and grey ones for the mist. “Tiens, tiens!” says the Parisian, with an appearance of disdain, in which there is an undertone of admiration; “their tricks are without number.”—“But,” says another, “I will tell you one of their tricks which deserves praise, and from which we might learn a lesson. They go about their work very quietly; we make too much noise with our clarions and drums—we warn the enemy of our movements a mile off. How much better is their low whistle! Their people hear it well enough, and we do not hear it at all.”—“But, talking of whistles,” the conversation goes on, “have you heard of that

other dodge? The other night they managed a reconnaissance in the woods of Clamart by means of hootings like so many owls. Our fellows heard the hooting, and could not make out what it was at first. They have got a little instrument to hoot with." Then says another, "Quite as good as the owl is the dog trick. The outposts at Creteil have a dog who watches for them, and barks when any one approaches." Hear one more story of a window. "Our people saw a man's head there, evidently the man on guard. It was daring too much, and they peppered him with their Chassepôts. But every time a shot took effect, and we began to crow for triumph, back came another sentinel, showing himself at the window, as brave as ever. We killed him off; he was replaced by a third. Him also we killed; and a fourth, and a fifth, and a sixth. I assure you we admired the pluck of these fellows coming to the window like that, one after another, to be shot. At last we found that it was only a lay figure. Rather clever, wasn't it?"

Cleverest of all, however, is the spy system, which has been conducted with as much boldness as ability. The Prussians have a knowledge of the French language, which enables them to carry out their espionage with an ease which is utterly beyond the possibilities of a Frenchman, who rarely knows any language but his own. A Prussian officer has been known to come into Paris and dine like any Frenchman in the Café Riche. In the earlier weeks of the siege the Frenchwomen of gay life paid many and many a visit to the Prussian lines. Then many spies got to and fro between the lines on pretence of gathering vegetables in the fields around. Some poor people drove a thriving business by carrying out newspapers, for which they were often paid in gold. The Prussians were in this way kept well informed of all that was being done in Paris, and there are cases in which the officer on guard at an advanced post knew the watch-word of the French lines when it had been unknown to a French soldier, or forgotten by him. Somehow or the other they knew perfectly well when the two great sorties, one upon Champagne, the other upon Bourget, were intended. The Prussian spies have been found with the pass of General Trochu all regularly filled up. The other day, at Asnières, the Mobs got suddenly into a forsaken cottage, where they found four Germans in the act of changing their costume—two were being attired as peasants in blue blouses, a third as a Mobile, and the fourth as an honest Alsatian coming to Paris to seek his fortune. So, a few days ago, on the banks of the Marne, a whole family was seized. There was a little villa near

Nogent, occupied by a middle-aged gentleman of distinguished manners. His house continued to be occupied when those around were abandoned. It was watched. Suspicion had been excited, the more as the owner had a German name. One night a light was seen moving at one of the windows—now in one direction, now in another, now suddenly concealed, then again exposed, then describing a curve, then stationary. Similar signs, as if in response, were observed from the other side of the Marne. There seemed to be no doubt as to a system of telegraphy. The occupants of the house were arrested and carried off to Vincennes. But the most curious discovery of all appears to have been that of Sergeant Hoff. He went out almost every night in October and November, declared that he had shot a Prussian—sometimes two or three—and brought back their helmets as trophies. He became a mighty hero in Paris. We used every day to hear of some daring exploit achieved by the marvellous Sergeant Hoff. Sometimes he went forth in one direction, sometimes in another. But always he brought back a trophy, and a strange story of daring enterprise. The papers would say, "This is now the thirty-seventh Prussian killed by the adventurous Sergeant Hoff." Before we had ceased talking of the dead we would read—"Sergeant Hoff has killed two more." Rewards were showered upon him, and people stood open-mouthed to hear the stories of the brave man. At the battle of Champigny he disappeared. Great were the lamentations over his disappearance. Poor Sergeant Hoff—how sad to think of such a man losing his life! It is now declared with the utmost assurance that he was a Prussian spy. It seems to be proved that he was a German, and his mistress, a Frenchwoman, whom he has left behind him in Paris, has let out certain facts which seem to carry guilt home to him. This is rather ungrateful of her, as he left with her all the money which he heaped together as the result of his heroism, amounting to 7,000f. or 8,000f. Many people take the fact of his having acquired such funds as the most decided proof of his guilt; but in point of fact it proves nothing either way. The money might have been given to him as the wages of his "espionage," and it might have been obtained as booty from the men he slew in fight. I do not know all the facts; I am loth to condemn an absent man; and who has not learned to be very doubtful of the worth of these eternal accusations of spying? One of the officers under whom Hoff served says:—"It is improbable that he was a spy—it is impossible—it is absurd. He never went out alone; he and his men were commanded by me, or one of my comrades,

and he slew his Prussians under our eyes." In spite of this statement, his accusers persist in their charge. They declare that Hoff's real name was Hentzel, and that his real rank was that of lieutenant in a Bavarian regiment of Chasseurs. A detachment of free-shooters of the Seine declare that they could not mistake him, and that they took him a few days ago at Bezons, recognized him, and shot him. It is now also remembered that he had a peculiar fashion of going on his expeditions. He went forth with companions, but he seldom returned with any—they were nearly always shot. Those who returned alive from the advanced positions assailed by Sergeant Hoff declare that he always did his business alone. He made them hold a particular ground, while he himself refused all companionship on what seemed to be the more perilous part of his adventure. He went forward single-handed; after a time a shot would be heard, or shots; and then he brought back his usual booty—most conspicuous of all being the helmet. Now and then he was known to fire shots under the eyes of his companions, but always without effect.

Paris, then, is full again of this spy fever, and of stories about spies; but it cannot be necessary to say that most of the accusations which we hear are utterly false. The chief attack this week was directed against General Schmitz, the chief of the staff, and against some lady of his family. No names were mentioned, but all Paris understood at whom the insinuations in the newspapers were levelled. General Trochu thought the scandal of such importance as to deserve at his hands an indignant denial.

The bombardment continues. Sometimes it relaxes in fury, and then it resumes the attack with all the old violence—chiefly in the night. The people endure it with a fortitude which is worthy of all praise. The inhabitants of the left bank of the Seine are now crowding to the right bank, and all are lending themselves cheerfully to help these Southerners out of their difficulty. The charity of Paris is boundless. I had no idea till this winter what a kind-hearted people these French are. We have an idea in England that they are frivolous and heartless, and that their kindly manners do not reach below the surface. You should see their self-sacrifice—their almsgiving—their good-heartedness—their boundless liberality. The misery of the poor is very great; but it brings out all the finer qualities of French nature, showing how those who have nothing can endure with heroism, and how those who have to spare will give what they have most generously. Whatever be the result of the siege—

whether Paris be saved or captured—she will come out of the fiery furnace ennobled and purified with a sense of greatness which even defeat cannot destroy, and with a possession of human feeling which will assure to her, and regain for her, what under the sway of Napoleon she had nearly lost—the empire of the heart. It is, perhaps, difficult, in the moment when she is downtrodden, and the victorious enemy at her gates points to her the finger of scorn, and assumes to be the scourge of God, to imagine such victory growing out of defeat; but it is not the first time in the history of the world that the weak has confounded the strong, and that out of death and decay have sprung life, resurrection, and victory.

Of course, however, Paris hopes to be saved, and is doing the best she can to win. That best for the moment consists in making all ready for a great attack, if peradventure the armies of the provinces should come to our relief, and in husbanding our resources to the last degree. Nobody in Paris doubts that salvation will come if we can only wait—or at least nobody doubts it who is not a foreigner. The greatest efforts are accordingly being made to economize the food, and to apportion it so that it may last as long as possible. Hitherto we have had unlimited quantities of bread, but now I hear that it is to be rationed. The bread is not very agreeable—it is black; but I suppose it is wholesome, and I dare say it will last longer than the enemy imagines. The horses, too, are being very carefully told out—and one hears many sighs as the time comes for killing a favourite animal. Most persons in good position have tried to save their horses in various ways—some by lending them to the ambulances, others by registering them as connected otherwise with the army or the public service. In this way most of the ambulances have had more than three times as many horses as they actually required. Then foreigners set up a claim to have their horses respected. But war is war, and hunger is a terrible tyrant. The horses are being seized with ruthless hand, and a decree has just been launched that all must be given up with the exception of 2,000, which are to be reserved for the necessities of traction. These 2,000 horses are distributed among the different mayoralties on the calculation of one to 1,000 inhabitants. If an arrondissement has 100,000 inhabitants, it will be allowed 100 horses at the disposal of the mayor, who will let them out as he sees fit for such service as may be necessary. In like manner the cows are to be killed, with the exception of 3,000, which are reserved to supply milk for children and invalids. The mortality among children has been very severe, and much of it is said to be due to the want of milk. The 3,000 cows

are accordingly reserved for them, and are apportioned among the different districts of Paris according to population. You will see from this—and there is no use in concealing it—that we are pinched very hard, but still the end is not by any means so near as the enemy imagines. What I am most afraid of is the end of all. Paris will hold out to the last extremity. She believes in her armies of succour; and whatever may be your own views on the subject, I ask you, for the sake of argument, to assume that succour comes—that Paris is delivered—but after a considerable delay. It is expected here most assuredly that the armies of the provinces will save Paris, but it is not expected that they will save her in a day. They will have to fight hard; deliverance may be long delayed; it may make all the difference in the world whether Paris can or cannot hold out one day more. Let us suppose that she holds out that one day, and still another day, and that then deliverance comes. The joy may be great indeed, but it will not feed 2,000,000 starving wretches. It will take at least a week, under favourable conditions, to get a day's provisions into the town—it may take a fortnight; and we require 2,000 tons a day of one kind or another. How are we to get these 2,000 tons a day? Imagine the distress, the sickness, the mortality, the famine, and the famine fever, while the provisions are delayed. If Paris can be saved, she will regard such suffering as of small account; it is worth the price. If Paris cannot be saved—if the armies of the provinces are to be beaten—then the best thing to hope for is that these armies may be beaten quickly.

To keep our spirits up some of us have taken to laughing, and it is proposed to establish in Paris a new institution—that of Philanthropophagy; or, the fraternal mastication of man by man. Savages have established the institution of cannibalism. Let us refine upon it, and eat each other, not as enemies, but as brethren. Philanthropophagy is the word. We are to begin with the Ministers. It will be for them a species of canonization.

Le gouvernement provisoire
Pour le bien qu'il nous a forgé
Mérite, *tout entier*, la gloire
D'être philanthropophagie !

Jan. 16.—The people are leaving the left bank of the Seine in great numbers, and those who remain take care to find shelter for the night in the safest nooks. The work of removal, or what is poetically called in Scotland flitting, goes on apace. It is calculated that about 400,000 people have removed, or are on the point of removing, to safe quarters—leaving the left bank to the care of firemen, the guardians of the peace,

and a few régiments of Guards. Mr. Richard Wallace has added to his renown in Paris by subscribing £4,000 for the relief of those who suffer from the change. He has already won golden opinions here by his benefactions, not only to his own countrymen who are in distress, but also to the poor of Paris. Nearly the whole of the English population of Paris who have suffered from the siege are indebted to him, and to him chiefly, for their means of living; and he has done so much for the Parisians, that they propose to name one of their principal streets or boulevards after him. He certainly makes most generous use of the vast property which he has inherited from Lord Hertford.

Between the 30th of December and the 10th of January no American bag was delivered here because of some misunderstanding as to the usage of the white flag of parley. A Prussian *parlementaire* had on the 23rd of December been fired at by mistake, whereupon Count Bismarck announced to Mr. Washburne, in a letter dated the 27th, but received on the 30th, that no more parleying with the white flag would be permitted until the offence should be explained, and guarantees given that it would not be repeated. It takes time to make inquiries and to find explanations, and the Chancellor of the Confederation of the North obtained out of the delay an excuse to delay the transmission of the American bag, which he knew contained the invitation to M. Jules Favre. Let me say a word or two as to the question raised in the excuse itself. Count Bismarck complains that his messenger bearing the white flag was shot at—that several such messengers have been in peril. He quite ignores the fact that the French make similar complaints on their side, and can prove them. General Trochu, in reply to Count Bismarck, sent him proofs of the peril incurred by French officers bearing the white flag. Mistakes will occur; they should be carefully guarded against, and when they occur they should be punished; but they afford no reason why the humane usage of the white flag should be abolished between hostile armies, as Count Bismarck, with a little more irritation than was necessary, seems to insist. War is a very rude business, in which with the best intentions it is not possible at all times to do justice to the graces of life. The French are furious with the Germans for the way in which they have conducted the present war. I could tell you a hundred stories, and no doubt you have heard many complaints. Some of these complaints may be just, but I know from what I have seen that a good number of them are groundless. Thus you will find in the German papers denunciations of the French for firing on the Geneva flag, and,

on the other hand, the French are ceaseless in their accusations of the Germans for firing on their ambulances and killing the attendants who wear the red cross. In most cases, however, these recriminations are needless. As for the French, it is true that they are suspicious of the Geneva flag, when they see it in the German lines, for they have found their adversaries full of tricks, and one of these is to shelter their operations under cover of the flag. Of course the chiefs of the army would not sanction such a use of it; but an army is made up of units and companies, and these units and small companies, when detached, will be found to possess in divers degrees the sentiment of honour. Various detachments have been known to seek for success in unworthy wiles, as for example by holding their muskets butt-end upwards, in sign of surrender, when they had no intention of surrendering, and were only bent on throwing the enemy off their guard; and others have been known to shelter themselves from attack by hoisting the red cross over posts where they wished to make themselves comfortable. I have gone to the Seine at Boulogne, and within two or three hundred yards of the French lines I have seen the red-cross flag hung out of windows at St. Cloud, where it is difficult to imagine that the Germans had any right to place their wounded, and where it was natural to suppose that some officer had his quarters. The French have in this way become a little suspicious of the uses to which the Geneva flag may be turned, and may on occasions have attacked it unjustifiably; but as a rule they have religiously respected it, and would be filled with horror at the thought of having done it an injury.

On the other hand, if the Germans have not always respected the Geneva flag as used by the French, they are not always to blame—the French expect too much from this flag. At the battle of Châtillon, one of the ambulances was within two hundred yards of the cross-fire. What business had it to be in such a position? And how could it expect immunity from the perils of the battle-field? At the battle of Malmaison, the ambulances were, as usual, eager to help the wounded, and to outvie each other in doing good. In this kindly rivalry one of the ambulances, with half a dozen carriages all flying the red-cross flag, got close up behind a French battery that was pouring its shells on the enemy. The officer commanding the artillery turned round with the cry, “Down with your flag! Down with your flag! Don’t you see we are firing and receiving fire? If you remain here you must take down your flag.” It was the American ambulance, and they took down their flag. They were not prudent, but plucky,

and they chose to remain. At Bourget, one of the Christian Brothers received a mortal wound on the field of battle, and a chaplain was in the greatest danger of his life. Let me say, in passing, that the *Frères Chrétiens* have most nobly done their duty. They have never feared to risk their lives; they have crowded to the battle-field in scores, and may be seen in their black robes and enormous hats performing every kindly office to the wounded. Now, one of the Christian Brothers got shot at Bourget, and the French press made a great noise about it, saying, "What wretches these Germans are; they might have seen the black robe and the Geneva flag." For my part, I do not believe that the poor Brother was shot intentionally; but you cannot stop a battle because a Christian Brother chooses to get under fire. With all respect for the motives of the ambulance managers, I think they are bolder than they need be. The ambulances engage a number of persons to go out as volunteers to carry the wounded on stretchers from the battle-field. These men have no notion that they may be led under fire, and undertake the task willingly. On the Bourget day I found my position on the battle-field rather dull, and wanted to get forward; but I did not know very well how to manage it, as I wore no uniform, and no red cross either on my arm or on my hat. At last came a chance. The mules began to file past laden with wounded men, one on each side. These had been picked up by the military Intendance, but seeing them, the private ambulances thought it was high time for them to go forward. A considerable band of the Christian Brothers went forward carrying stretchers, two and two. Then followed others in plain clothes. I said nothing, but went forward with them, as if I belonged to them. I left them, however, because they seemed to be going to a part of the ground where the battle had ceased. It turned out that they had scarcely reached that part of the field when the fire broke out upon it anew, and they had to beat a retreat, crawling away on hands and knees. I got hold of another detachment of stretcher-bearers, and went on with them to Drancy. There, behind a wall, we stood watching the artillery duel which was going on close at hand. The French artillery were between Drancy and the Groslay Farm—the Prussian fire came from Pont Iblon and Blanc Mesnil. After about an hour the French began to retreat, and in a slanting direction right in front of us, so as to place us, where we stood, in the line of fire. Our wall was no protection to us, and I suggested to my ambulance friends that they had better retire. Some scampered off with great alacrity, others went calmly enough; but we had scarcely

left the spot when a shell burst upon it. Suppose any of us had been hurt. I know for myself I should have looked very foolish. What possible right could I have to complain, standing there for mere curiosity? And I do not believe that the people of the ambulance had any better right than myself to stand there. They obeyed no orders but their own. They had no instructions; they were simply told to do the best they could; and if they chose to get shot, that was their own lookout. They had no business to go into the battle; and they ought not to complain if they are shot by mistake.

January 16.—Can you conceive anything more monotonous than the beating of carpets? That is what the bombardment comes to in its last analysis. An immense number of men are engaged in beating stone walls instead of carpets. Their labours are embellished with an imposing display of smoke, of flame, and of deafening sound; but when I attempt to describe the work which is now going on, stripped of its din, its glare, and its clouds, I find myself reduced to a pitiful remembrance of one of the most prosaic of all prosaic events—the dreary monotony of hearing men beating carpets, or of a poor labourer by the wayside breaking stones. It is difficult to imagine anything more appalling than the incessant thunder sustained for some forty hours without relaxation; but when one thinks of it in cool blood, one is apt to be a little cynical over human nature making all this pother for nothing. Such sound and fury were never before heard in battle, because never before were so many guns of such tremendous power called into action. It seemed as if the foundations of the world were to be shaken, and as if Titans warred with Titans. And yet all the sound and fury signified nothing, or next to nothing. Certainly the Prussian guns got no advantage over the French which was not amply recompensed by similar advantages gained by the French side. The German successes of yesterday and to-day are reducible to the few persons who were killed and wounded, and to the architectural destruction wrought by the bombs falling on Paris. The Krupp guns have at last managed to get across the Seine, but only at one point. They have got to the Quai Béthune, close to the station of the Lyons Railway. The farthest that a Prussian projectile has yet reached is to the Rue Visconti, close to the Institute; but the shell is not to be found, although several persons bear witness to its arrival. It did not explode, and it probably got buried in a garden. One shell has broken into the dome of the Pantheon; another has smashed into the Ministry of Public Works. The damage produced, however, is wonderfully little, if one considers the tremendous waste of powder and shot.

I could not help being profoundly impressed with the present aspect of the war as I walked through Paris this morning very early—between four and five. Paris was as still as a mouse; not a soul in the streets, but the sentinels here and there, muffled up in cloaks and hoods, and shivering by their boxes. The streets were dark, and echoed strangely to my solitary footsteps. All this time there was a furious cannonade outside the walls. As if the roar were a lullaby, the people were all sleeping quietly in the districts through which I passed.

In ordinary times there are not a few people to be seen in the streets at four in the morning, either bent on work or returning from pleasure. But here there are no pleasure parties, or only a few, of the kind called “small and early.” As for work, there is not much work done in Paris just now which is unconnected with the war. I asked for a book to be bound the other day. It is utterly impossible. All the work done in Paris just now resolves itself into two grand operations, which are intimately related—the making of war and the preparing of food. At four o’clock in the morning, just now, everybody is in bed who is not on guard. Not a cab in the streets. For that matter, there is not a cab to be seen after midnight, and the streets are deserted even by foot passengers. What was I doing out so late at night? At one o’clock this morning there was a death-like stillness in the street, when suddenly there came a loud knocking at the gateway of the hotel where I lodge. The *concierge* is a heavy sleeper; he is a National Guard; he has been on duty for four-and-twenty hours, and he is sleeping with the inertia of a 68-pounder. At last the door is opened; I hear the steps on the stairs; there is a knock at my door, and in walks with a lantern (we carry lanterns now) a sailor all in blue, with his honest face grinning from ear to ear. He may well smile, for these sailors are welcome everywhere. They are the bravest soldiers in France; fight like devils; and they are petted wherever they go. The sailor comes to inform me that a balloon is to start at five or six o’clock in the morning—suddenly ordered. “But how is this?” I asked. “I was told at the post-office to-day that there would be no balloon.”—“It is not a post-office balloon,” he replied; “it will carry no letters; it is chartered by the telegraph; the aeronaut will carry your letters in his private bag. I had orders, if I found you in bed, to wake you up and tell you.” It boots not to tell you how I entertained the sailor and how I dismissed him. I wrote some letters, and I hope you received that which was destined for you and your readers. Then at half-past four I started forth for the Great Northern Station, to put my letters into the

balloon ; and thus it was that I traversed Paris in the middle of the night, and found it buried in a nightcap (every Parisian without exception wears a nightcap, with a great tassel at the top), while Krupp was roaring like a legion of lions all round Paris. The telegraph, let me add, was sending off this balloon in reply to the 15,000 despatches which came into Paris yesterday (Sunday) week. That is indeed a curious point. The pigeon arrived on Sunday, January 8, with 15,000 despatches. It took the whole week to enlarge, to decipher, and to distribute them. At the end of the week the telegraph people were ready with a heap of replies ; and here was the balloon going off to manage their affairs. A balloon costs £200 ; so I hope they find profit enough in the transaction.

The report to be given as to the health of Paris is worse and worse. The deaths in the week ending January 7 were 3,680 ; those in the week following, 3,982.

I must end with an anecdote—still on the sempiternal question of food. We have killed the porcupine, and are eating him in dainty morsels. A little girl hears her mother say that the butcher Dubois has killed the porcupine, and we are going to eat him. Her notion of the porcupine resolves itself into an accumulation of penholders, such as she sees on papa's writing-table. The *raison d'être* of the porcupine is to produce penholders. When, therefore, the news reaches the ears of the child that the porcupine is killed, and to be eaten, she asks, "But, dear mamma, are we going to eat penholders?" I am sure we have eaten much worse.

Jan. 17.—About twelve days ago, the chief Prussian attack was directed against Vanves, which was reduced to silence more than once by an overwhelming fire, but not in such a manner that it could not recover its voice. The chief attack has now been directed against Issy, which has also been several times silenced and forced to take breath. I observe that the Prussian official reports mention, with a considerable air of triumph, the silencing of this or that fort. But, after all, what is it? These partial and temporary successes look well in a report, but they are for the most part illusory. If a gun is dismounted to-day, it can be remounted to-morrow ; and if Issy and Vanves are silenced for a time they soon open fire again, as if nothing had been amiss. To-day the fire seems to have somewhat slackened ; but this is more appearance than reality, for much depends on the direction of the wind. If the wind brings the loud roar into Paris, the people look at each other and say, "There it goes. They make noise enough, these Prussians." If it drives the roar away, they say, "At last they begin to

tire, these Prussians. I should think King William has had enough of it." The official reports tell us very little of what is going on ; they have never yet been so vague and meagre. General Trochu has been so much criticised for his tendency to talk and to write, that this time apparently he proposes to act without words.

Jan. 17.—I went at three in the morning of Monday, January 9, to see the balloon Duquesne start from the station of the Orleans Railway. It was a beautiful night, only interrupted by a storm of shells from the Prussian batteries bombarding the south bank of the Seine, but more particularly the hospital of the Salpêtrière, about 200 yards from the station. Let me say, in passing, that few incidents of the bombardment have caused more indignation and disgust in Paris than this shelling on last Monday morning of the Salpêtrière, which is a hospital devoted to 3,000 aged women, and to about 1,000 mad ones. If the shells had been levelled upon the balloon, which was inflated in the Gare d'Orléans, close at hand, they might have done some damage, over which the Prussians would have a right to rejoice ; but what possible good could be got out of shelling the old women in the Salpêtrière ? I enclose a protest against this act of wanton cruelty, and return to the balloon, which was one of the largest launched by the brothers Godard. It was 2,000 cubic mètres in size, and had to carry, besides the usual load of letters, pigeons, and newspapers, a screw apparatus invented by Admiral Labrousse, which was expected to steer the air-ship, not against the wind, but at a favourable angle. Besides the aeronaut who commands the balloon, three sailors went up with him to work the screw. A considerable crowd assembled in the station to see the balloon go off, conspicuous among whom were M. Dorian, the Minister of Public Works, who has taken the greatest interest in the experiment ; M. Rampont, the indefatigable director of the Post-office, who hopes by means of this steering gear to get return balloons, with bags of letters ; and Admiral Labrousse, the inventor of the system. The wind was driving due east, at the rate of four mètres a second ; and in obedience to such an impulse, the balloon would naturally go straight into Germany. But it was observed and agreed by all of us, that directly the balloon rose to a sufficient height, and the action of the screw began to take effect, the great monster diverged from the east and leaned more to the south. If the screws worked well under the brawny arms of the three sailors who had to manage them, the balloon, instead of going to Germany, ought to have gone into Switzerland. The four

men in the basket with the screw were sadly cramped for room ; but I trust that they got safe through, and that my letters have reached you.

Perhaps you in London, who get well fed every day, think it very mean of us in Paris to talk so much of our food. But, indeed, nearly every person that I know of talks of it more for amusement than for complaint. The only persons I hear complaining are a few Englishmen, who have no right to be here, unless they are willing to accept the sufferings of the siege. They criticise everything—they are eternally finding fault—they see no good in anything—they have been predicting ever since the siege began that the Prussians would be in Paris in seven days—always seven days—and they are indignant that Paris does not surrender, because they find a deficiency of beef-steak. I blush for my country when I meet them, when I hear their arrogant criticism, and when I see how anxious they are that Paris should cease her heroic struggle and submit to be conquered simply that they may be a little more comfortable. Paris, the supposed Sybarite, is very good-humoured over the question of food, and is not at all exacting ; but still it naturally talks and thinks a good deal of what it finds rather difficult to get. The discussion in the Academy of Sciences turned upon a subject of great interest to Mrs. John Sprat. You may remember that Jack Sprat, as he was familiarly called, could eat no fat, that Mrs. Sprat could eat no lean, and that so between them both they licked—the rhyme, I regret to observe, says licked—they licked the platter clean. Poor dear Jack Sprat would be in his element just now in Paris, for there is no fat ; his wife would, I fear, long ere now, for the want of her favourite aliment, have added to those weekly bills of mortality whereof lately you have heard enough. The Academy of Sciences took into consideration, at its last sitting, the want of the fatty ingredients of alimentation, and the object of its study was to show how tallow-candles and lamp oil may be rendered palatable as well as nourishing. You see there is no butter, except at thirty francs a pound ; the salad oil is nearly exhausted, and we are reduced for our salads to colza oil and rapeseed oil ; also the animals which are being killed for food are wonderfully lean. The only very fat butcher's meat that I see is dog. It was my fate to eat some mutton broth the other day—that is, dog broth with a dog cutlet in it. The cutlet was very fat, and in passing by a butcher's stall to-day, in the market St. Honoré, I was struck with the beauty of a saddle of mutton. Never after the cattle show in London have I seen a fatter saddle of mutton ; it was a saddle of dog, at three shillings a pound.

Yes, people eat their dogs here with touching devotion. It is even said that a little lady here gave up her precious lap-dog, Bijou, to be eaten. Bijou was killed; Bijou was cooked; Bijou was eaten. And Bijou's mistress was observed at dinner to put Bijou's bones aside on her plate mechanically, and was heard to remark, with a sigh, "Oh, how my dear little Bijou would have enjoyed these bones!" But, after all, dog fat, though abundant, is not very tempting, and the wise men of Paris have found it necessary to invent a method of cooking tallow-candles. Of course I am not going to divulge the sacred mysteries of the kitchen; but I advise all those who will do me the honour to read this epistle to go to their clubs, and if they see marrow-bones on the bill of fare, to order the cook to send them up some toast and tallow-candles instead.

The third subject of discussion to which I referred is a painful one—that of the bombardment, than which no deed of war can be, in the case of Paris, more unjustifiable, none more worthy of execration. It is nothing but a wicked, useless act of vengeance, which tarnishes the honour won by the German army. The Academy of Sciences is very indignant that the Garden of Medical Botany has not been spared. It was founded in 1626 by Louis XIII. ; it became the Museum of Natural History in 1794. There, say the Academicians, Buffon wrote his immortal work; there Jussieu classified plants according to the natural method, which has since been adopted all over the world; there Cuvier founded the science of comparative anatomy; there Geoffrey St. Hilaire commenced his system of philosophical anatomy. The ground is sacred to all who glory in the triumphs of science. But the Prussian cannon have not spared it; they have shelled it unmercifully. Also in the Jardin des Plantes there was a most precious greenhouse filled with rare tropical plants. It had cost, with its contents, about £25,000, and it has been destroyed by barbaric bombs. Who can wonder that the scientific celebrities of Paris are indignant at such sacrilege?

I went again, the other day, to the Church of Sainte-Genevieve (strictly speaking, St. Etienne du Mont), to see if it had suffered further damage. It had been struck, as yet, by only one shell, on the gable-end facing the Rue Clovis, but the projectile had left such a mark there as I hope the wardens of the church will not attempt to efface. It makes a goodly mark of remembrance on that noble and venerable pile which enshrines the ashes of the two greatest of French thinkers—Descartes and Pascal, whose influence on modern thought is imperishable, and is felt profoundly even by masses who, perhaps, never

heard of their names. What must the feelings of any cultivated Frenchman be when he sees this grand monument—charged with, for him, so many sacred memories, and so many beautiful associations connected with the virgin saint of Paris—struck by the rude lightnings of the enemy, which in their passage missed, as by a miracle, the famous Pantheon, raised in honour of all that is greatest and worthiest in France?

Outside Paris the progress of the bombardment was noted with the keenest interest, and every real or apparent gain was instantly telegraphed to the ends of the world. The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote from Margency, on the 9th:—

Forts Rosny, Noisy, and Nogent preserve their strange silence, with the blinds down or the shutters up, whichever expression may be preferred. Nevertheless, we are not daring to take liberties with them just yet. Forts Issy and Vanves were silenced yesterday, it was believed definitely, and experimentally during the night some batteries were pushed forward a thousand paces closer to them. Under this aggravation these forts this morning recommenced a feeble fire in reply to a very brisk one. The batteries playing on these forts are at Meudon, Clamart, and Porte Châtillon. Six batteries in all, as I understand, converge their fire upon Issy, five upon the other fort. The batteries in the Park of St. Cloud face in three directions—one to St. Cloud and Valérien, another to Boulogne and farther, a third to Billancourt and beyond. The batteries at Meudon radiate their fire towards Boulogne, Billancourt, and over the Ile St. Germain, to Pont-du-Jour and Paris. Of the six Clamart batteries four concern themselves solely with Fort Vanves, and two devote their attentions to Fort Issy. In the same connection I may mention that *La Vérité*, of the 7th instant, a copy of which I have seen, states that shells from the Clamart batteries have fallen in the garden of the Luxembourg, where there is a large lazarette, which has consequently been shifted and brought nearer the heart of the town. It is worthy of note that the garden of the Luxembourg is within the old line of fortifications, not in the space between that and the new *enceinte*, so that the dropping of these shells is virtually bombarding Paris.

There is a strong revolutionary tone in the writings of *La Vérité*. A revolution might be no bad thing. If I read Trochu aright, although something of a potterer, he is a man who has set his teeth hard against capitulation. Were he “dismounted”—to use the expression the Germans are so fond of as regards fort guns—a man must take his place after the hearts of the

Parisians, in their present mood. He would go at a sortie like a bull at a gate. The result would be disastrous. Then the army—the real fighting men—who have already been shouting “Peace” as their generals rode past, would shout “Peace” in the ears of Paris, in accents not to be misunderstood, pointed as they would be with a firm determination no longer to endure, for the sake of others who will not stand abreast of them in the field, slaughter in battle, ruthless destruction by bomb-shells, the agonies of cold that kill men as they stand at their posts—in a word, hopeless tortures, dangers, and hardships. When this shout from the throat of the army rings in the ears of Paris, then we may make ready, for the end will be very nigh at hand, and neither impulsive general nor clamorous patriot will postpone it.

There are to-day, at the head-quarters of the 4th Army Corps, three French Garde Mobile officers and some eight or nine soldiers, who came among us in a sufficiently strange manner. A little party sallied out of Gennevilliers last evening, one at its head waving in the moonlight a white handkerchief as a flag of truce. There lay a boat on the bank of the Seine opposite to Argenteuil, into which there got two officers and three men, the men on the farther bank continuing meanwhile to wave the white handkerchief without intermission. These landed, and at once proclaimed themselves deserters, demanding, with serene equanimity, to be made prisoners of. One of the soldiers, the request having been complied with, announced his desire to go back for the others, and this being permitted, he crossed, and then recrossed with the second boat-load. I meant to have gone this afternoon to see the deserter officers, the first of the Mobiles in Paris who have thus lost their honour, with a view to obtain from them some information as regards the condition of Paris, and to send it to you, to be believed in as much as statements made by recreants might deserve. A command, however, that I could not disregard, to be elsewhere this evening, has compelled me to forego the intention.

The Special Correspondent at the King of Prussia's headquarters wrote, on the 18th of January, from Versailles :—

The severe weather of the present season is a great advantage to the Germans before Paris, inasmuch as it is a great disadvantage to the luckless French garrison. I do not know that any of the besiegers have suffered more from cold than they are accustomed to suffer every winter of their lives at home; whilst it is certain that the scarcity of fuel, and the claims of outpost duty, make the besieged groan over the biting cold. With

good village quarters, and plenty of flooring and furniture to burn, the gallant lads from Germany can laugh at ten degrees of frost. They have stout clothing and ample rations, they are buoyed up by constant success, and the rate of mortality among them is less than the average rate in time of peace, when they live quietly in barracks. There are, of course, losses in battle to be set off against the heavier losses of the French, and there is home sickness preying on those who expected to be back again before Christmas time. But, as far as wind and weather are concerned, the besiegers might safely undertake to go through the same trial for three winters to come.

The weather has interfered with the bombardment, not by cold, but by chill driving mists. Since the opening of fire against the southern forts on January 5, we have only had one really clear day, and on the other days there has been more or less thickness of the wintry haze upon the landscape. To the Germans, who aim with care, and trust to their good shooting for success, this has been a most decided drawback. They have had the best of the artillery duel, and have dismounted many French guns, but if the weather had been less hazy they might have effected still greater mischief. It is reported, in the *Moniteur Officiel* of Versailles, that so early as the 5th instant some shells fell into the garden of the Luxembourg, and with a fair chance for their aim the gunners in the German batteries might have struck the Luxembourg Palace itself. I observe a gradual approach to the idea of thorough bombardment among both officers and men of the German army. They have persuaded themselves that the King will consent to strong measures, now that the forts have been fairly tackled. All these stray shots, made at random into the city, are but to prepare the way for a systematic attempt to compel a speedy surrender. So at least say the Germans. King William, they add, has been loth to injure Paris, and had always refused to allow the shelling of the suburbs until his artillery should have engaged the outlying forts. Now, however, that the forts have been engaged, and partially silenced, His Majesty will grant the prayer of his soldiers. In a day or two more, should the French still be obstinate, a shower of incendiary shells of great size will be poured upon them.

In former letters I have spoken of the causes which seemed to me to aid the German artillery in its success against the forts. There is the firing upwards at a line, a vague spadework, with only quick flashes and wreaths of smoke to guide the aim. There is the advantage of the newly-chosen position as against the position long known to all the world. The French guns

fire through embrasures, the Prussian are pointed, *en barbette*, over the top of the parapet, and this seems also an advantage to the Prussians. Then there is undeniably the greater effect of the Prussian shells when they burst, and the steady aim of the gunners who use them. It cannot be said that the French "Naval Brigade" has done well in this struggle. The men have doubtless shown activity and pluck; indeed, I hear that two or three of their struggles to get things straight and reopen fire have been worthy the service to which they belong. But their aim has been wretched. Where are the rivals of our crack shots from the *Excellent*? Where are the men who ought to be able to cut away an enemy's masts and knock off his rudder? The great guns in the forts should have dismounted many more of the German pieces, and should have at least fallen near the batteries at every round. As it was, I saw them bursting, on the 5th of January, all over the fields in rear of the besieging line, and calculated that three went astray for one that was well put home. The only thing that the French artillery seems able to do is to fight blindly on and die for the Republic. With men so obstinate, it would not surprise me to hear that they reopened all their forts again at the most awkward moment. The Prussians are quite awake to this chance, and will be very cautious in advancing on the forts without regular approaches. They admit that, though much knocked about, the French may be also "playing possum," as our Western friends phrase it; and that a fort, though silent, may not be absolutely silenced.

The news from north, and east, and south, is thought satisfactory at head-quarters, though it is not so good as might have been expected. Should Paris really be starving, and should General Trochu have only a month's more resistance in him, there will hardly be time for the provincials to save the capital. Chanzy is checked in one direction, Faidherbe is successfully held at bay in another. Even Bourbaki, the most threatening for the moment, is a long way off, and is, moreover, hampered in his movements by the weather. Let Paris but be reckoned as certain to fall before St. Valentine's Day, and the efforts of these different commanders may be taken to be almost certain to fail. The German grip is tight on the city, and the German troops will die rather than give ground. You can easily understand how bitter it would be to them to do so, and how splendidly they would fight to avert such a result.

From St. Germain-en-Laye a Military Correspondent wrote, on the 16th of January:—

In St. Germain we have a strong and splendid Landwehr regi-

ment of the Guard, with some cavalry and two field batteries, as a *soi-disant* permanent garrison. But frequent migrations of portions of these troops take place; lately, towards Versailles and to the southwards of that station. These Landwehr troops are certainly splendid specimens of the soldier. Ours are Landwehrs of the Grenadier battalions, stalwart, steadfast, stubborn-looking men, averaging from twenty-six to thirty-six years of age, having served for the most part in the '66 campaign, just arrived from home, and all anxious to bear their share in the capture of Paris.

Nothing can exceed the orderly and modest bearing of these troops, in billets and in barracks, at this station. By 8 P.M. they seem to vanish from the streets, and an hour afterwards every Teuton, save the necessary town guard, is in bed. I never fail to see the Landwehrs engaged in one military occupation or another. Every morning, from half-past nine to eleven, the Parterre and Terrace are full of squads of these soldiers, under their respective subaltern officers, and superintended by their captains. Some companies are occupied in the parade of their kits, when I observe that their boots are, as they should be (for serviceable boots for the infantry soldiers are next only in importance to serviceable ammunition), special objects of the most careful inspection. Next in importance come the shirts and greatcoats. The latter, by the way, are excellent, of strong milled cloth, with no admixture of the "shoddy" so lamentably familiar to our service. Each man has a detached hood or capeline, in cloth, with which he can cover the whole of his shako, or helmet, enveloping the ears and back of the head, and buttoning with two buttons under the chin. These head wrappers have only one objection, in my opinion—that of deadening the sound of approaching "objectionables," in windy weather, to sentries on outpost duty. Other companies and squads are engaged in drilling. The companies which are strong (125 men per company) go through every sort of manœuvre incidental to a battalion, or, rather, to a company in battalion. I am much struck with the perfect steadiness of the men in the ranks. Such a contrast to the ever-moving, ever-jabbering French infantry! Their strict attention to their instruction is remarkable, which I attribute to the fact that the Prussian officers keep their men but a moderate time at "attention," allowing them frequently to "stand at ease," thereby giving the soldier no excuse for carelessness or inattention when required for actual work. In skirmishing, their "aiming drill" is particularly attended to, each skirmisher being carefully watched and corrected, and cautioned to aim deliberately, and not lavish a single cartridge

uselessly. This will account for the effective fire of Prussian infantry when in actual contact with the enemy, for they rarely throw away a shot, aiming low and firing deliberately as they cover their object. This also accounts for a fact in the late sortie towards Champigny—that most of the French wounded had been found shot in the lower part of their bodies and legs. The Prussian officers appear to me full of zeal, professional knowledge, and up to their work in every detail. In drilling their companies or battalions, I observed that they never failed to station themselves from sixty to seventy yards in front of their men, and well to windward of them; for nothing renders soldiers more unsteady and nervous in the ranks than over-anxiety or straining on their part to catch the real intention of a faintly-heard word of command. The Prussian officers deliver their cautionary and executive words of command with that clearness and decision of tone which is indispensable to cause companies or battalions as large as those of the Prussian war establishment to move with confidence, precision, and celerity.

Jan. 11.—The other evening we were enlivened by an *alerte*, which flashed upon us about eight o'clock. The alarm sounded in my street, upon which I immediately sallied forth, watch in hand, on to the Grande Place, to ascertain personally how long it would take the Landwehrs, who were all quietly ensconced in their different billets, to fall in, have their rolls called, and march off to the threatened point, which was about two and a half miles distant on the banks of the Seine, opposite the high-road bridge, now demolished, at Châtou. From the first sound of the bugle until two strong Landwehr companies were formed up in complete marching order, and ready to move off, it took as nearly as possible twenty minutes. There were about 260 men in all. Each soldier had an extra blanket slung under his knapsack, twenty-four hours' cooked provisions in his havresack, alongside of which was his drinking flask—all, in fact, *au grand complet*. I was much struck by the soldier-like and noiseless way in which their falling in was conducted in the dark, and the business-like method of calling the rolls by the under-officers, to ascertain if any were absent, &c. There was not the sound of a voice in the ranks. No absentees were reported; upon which, in solid sections of "fours" from the right flank, away marched these sturdy soldiers, arms sloped with mathematical precision, and keeping their well-measured and uniform cadence of step as carefully as if filing to or from a common drill parade, instead of starting, as they were then, on a matter of life-and-death importance. When clear of the town their officers ordered

them to march at ease. Again, on this occasion, I could not help being struck with the distinct and unmistakable words of command of the officers. In my humble opinion, on all occasions, but on none so especially as on night duties of this nature, it is essential to give clear and distinct words of command, both "cautionary" and "executive"; it inspires confidence and exacts the greatest attention from the men. Should any confusion ensue through the darkness or from other causes, I should say the Prussian soldiers would thoroughly understand the system of rallying quietly round their colours, and there patiently "listening" for subsequent orders; for no man should, under such circumstances, ever attempt to open his mouth to "ask" for them.

The expected sortie proved abortive—but, as some very sharp musketry firing still continued after these troops had marched away, I followed them, taking advantage of the presence of an English ambulance waggon which had been ordered out in case its services should be required at the outposts in question. On arriving there we found the Landwehrs all very jollily engaged in smoking their pipes under cover of the houses on the side of the main road, which, although at nearly 2,000 mètres from the French, have been grazed by their "obus" and Chassepôt bullets. The French had some artillery present, with which they fired "obus" into the town of Châtou, and brought a chimney down close to the quarters of General von Loen, who commands the division here, and who had assisted at this unaccountable Gallic spurt ever since its commencement. There were no wounded for our waggon, and we were all back in St. Germain soon after midnight. It seems to me that the ordering out of the Prussian pickets, their method of posting their sentries, their system of supports and reserves, are very similar to our own regulations. Their outlying picket in general consists of one company per battalion, unless a larger or smaller number is specially ordered. They leave off duty sufficient men to draw provisions and cook, and their camp-kettles, carried on each man's pack, are those used by them in cooking if required. Should the particular company going on picket be too weak, it is made up to the required strength from the rest of the battalion, and this extra picket duty from other companies forms a separate roster. Each man during his picket has the same post as sentry that he is first placed in, and the most intelligent men are selected for sentries at the important stations. I am further informed that an officer is generally appointed to examine all deserters from the enemy, and to compare all their information so as to show collectively all

the details thus given. Reports in general terms as to the enemy's movements are not admitted. His supposed force is ordered to be stated in definite numbers, and of what arms that force is composed. In fact, I have every reason to believe that the Prussian system of outpost duty by their infantry, and patrolling by their indefatigable cavalry, ever on the move to keep up the communication from corps to corps, &c., are very nearly perfection.

Some years ago I remember hearing the late Lord Combermere state that at the commencement of the Peninsular War our infantry soldiers knew very little of outpost duties, nor our cavalry of efficient patrolling, until they received the valuable assistance of Colonel Arenschildt, who commanded the 1st German Hussars, only 400 strong. In co-operation with a weak English infantry division of 2,500 men, under General Craufurd, he managed to hold a very extensive tract of country in the face of Marshal Ney's corps, supported by numerous cavalry. The German Light Cavalry, which I have seen about here, appear to me well mounted on wiry, lasting-looking horses. The men are compactly built, having muscular-looking arms and shoulders, and averaging, I should say, from ten to twelve stone weight. They have a solid seat, less stiff than our own cavalry, and appear to have a lighter hand on their horses. After all the hard work they have been exposed to during the late exceptionally trying weather, their horses are in fair condition, and very few have sore backs. Can this latter most essential quality arise from the fact of their not always "bumping the pig-skin" in riding-school fashion, but being permitted to rise in their stirrups? As a rule most Germans are good horsemen, and horse masters. It is curious to notice how many of their infantry soldiers know how to sit and manage any stray horse they may throw their legs across. The Landwehr infantry officers especially, of whom all the captains are mounted, ride well, and very few of them would deserve the well-known sarcastic term of reproach with which the late Sir Hussey Vivian used to crush such cavalry officers as he considered to disgrace that branch of the "service" by inelegant equitation,— "*By Gad, sir, you ride for all the world like an Aidjutant of infantry!*"

The Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the King of Prussia wrote, on the 14th of January:—

In face of the great events which are happening before Paris, it is natural that General Trochu's conduct should be fiercely discussed. He has done much for his country, and may

be proud of having kept the Germans in play for about four months; but he has not broken through the besieging lines, and it begins to look as though he never would break through to the end of the chapter. It is very difficult to judge of his policy until we see the result fully developed. Watching him from outside, as we in Versailles have watched him since September 20, he seems to be a cool, cautious commander, very capable in organizing his forces, and perhaps a trifle slow in using them. He had but a small body of regular troops in the beginning of the siege, and the Mobiles, who are now capital soldiers, were then wanting in discipline. Added to this, you must take into account his weakness in field artillery. Days and months of labour were required to bring the field artillery of Paris into an efficient state. Days and months of labour meant so much loss of the precious time during which the food supplies would last. Whilst Trochu was preparing for a great sortie, the Germans awoke to the fact that they must strengthen their positions the better to resist him. In proportion to his readiness to come forth was their readiness to drive him back; and the small sorties which he made in September and October to amuse the people with a show of active work, helped the German commanders to study the debatable ground. They may thus have gained a trifling advantage, but they recognized the difficulties of Trochu's task, and thought that he kept things going on the other side with only too much success. How the faces of the Germans brightened when news came of the riot in the end of October! Here was good news indeed! Trochu arrested by the mob? The Germans wanted nothing better. As they felt sure of winning in the open field, they were anxious for the mob to get the upper hand, and come out for a final effort. Thousands would fall in vain attempts to break the line; and when the remnant fled back to Paris, there would be a panic in the city. So thought the besiegers when the besieged seemed likely to change their tactics. Trochu's very caution puzzled Von Moltke by causing delay. The German was eager to fight to any extent; but the Frenchman was not to be tempted into rashness. He may have overdone his cautious policy. Time will show. Certain it is that when he mildly resumed the sway which the October mob had seized, and spared his opponents' lives that there might be no additional bitterness in the party strife of the city, he had every reason to play a waiting game. The Army of the Loire was well nigh ready to march; and we now know that but for the capitulation of Metz, which set free so many Prussian troops, this Army of the Loire would have caused immense trouble

to the besiegers of Paris. It is but fair to General Trochu to remember these things. He made his sorties of November and December just in the nick of time for meeting Aurelle de Paladine had the other fought his way northward. Then there was a pause, as was natural after so severe a check as the French had received to the east of Paris; and then, a few days before Christmas, Trochu made another sortie, which suited well, in point of time and direction, with the march of General Faidherbe southward. There has not since been a chance for the Parisians of doing much on the offensive, for the attacks of the German siege guns have been incessant, and the weather has been very bad for taking the field. It would seem, from what has gone before, that Trochu will act cautiously and coolly in his difficult task, prolonging his defence to the last possible moment. We may calculate his prospects as those of a tactician who is slow but sure. He has kept the Germans waiting a long time, and he will keep them waiting yet a little longer, just because he will not risk his all upon a single cast.

The present combination of force and famine is very strong against the city, and the cold weather makes the lot of the people still harder. They are beginning to taste the horrors of bombardment. We learn by newspapers brought out of Paris that shells have fallen with effect in the inhabited parts, far beyond the ramparts. It remains to be seen whether the National Guard will endure not only danger to themselves, but the destruction of their homes and families. They might shrink from such a test without dishonour, but I do not think that they will. The opinion of earnest and thoughtful Germans will be again at fault in regard to this strange city, and the first effect of a bombardment will be to brace up the French, as a stroke from a riding whip on the face stiffens the resistance of an angry man. Not until the lesson has become really severe, and the first fierce cry of vengeance has been drowned in blood and tears, will the Parisians yield to force. The more formidable foe is famine. This is what the besieging army may count on in any case. Each fresh attack is helped by hunger within the walls, and we can now appreciate the admirable skill with which the two means have been worked up together at the end. Not a point of advantage was lost in the preparations for bombardment, for what mattered a few days more or less when delay would only bring hunger to bear as well as cannon?

There is high hope in the German ranks. The wintry sunshine glitters on the snow, and the gunners can take aim with fatal accuracy. Whilst the besieged suffer cold and hunger,

the besiegers are living well, and are keeping themselves thoroughly warm with an abundance of fuel. From day to day they expect to hear that Paris has surrendered. I find it difficult to talk of the immediate future without being set down as half-hearted about the siege; for I am apt to mention February 1 as a possible limit of time. It has been a story of such constant delay hitherto that one smiles at the hopeful tone with which "to-morrow" is regarded. To say that the French have food enough for a week more makes the average German look grave, nay almost sad; and to hint at any condition of affairs in Paris short of anarchy produced by terror evidently thought quite unkind. The German soldier is anxious to see his work honourably finished, and to get back to the dear ones in the Fatherland. The German trader is anxious to reap a rich harvest by spoiling the Egyptians. Both are weary of waiting. Thus it happens that we have a very limited horizon. We cannot allow the prospect to stretch out beyond a little distance ahead, and now that the end is really near we measure our hopes by days instead of weeks.

The Special Correspondent with the Army of the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote, on the 13th of January, from Margency:—

A day of dense fog and equally dense dulness. From the east we hear the lazy thud of a big gun now and then, fired, I suppose, in protest of total inactivity. Sometimes there comes a faint sough from the south, that might be a cartload of stones emptied in Epinay, or might be the attenuated noise of the southern bombardment. I have seen a regimental officer to-day, who left Versailles this morning, and who brings the tattle and gossip of the second "Staffel" of little big men located in the Hôtel des Réservoirs. He says, unofficial or semi-official Versailles is not at all pleased with the results of the bombardment, so far as it has gone, and especially is disgusted because some 200 shells, said to have been projected into Paris, have not produced the effect of a capitulation. I venture to interpret his news according to my own lights. I know that what Mr. Merriman calls the "princelets" did not wish for the bombardment at all, and are therefore not indisposed to cry it down. Now that it has commenced, however, there is a not unnatural, although very mistaken, impulse to weigh its effect against the effects of former bombardments by German siege guns. "No fortress has stood our breaching artillery over three days except Strasburg, and that for little longer."—"Avron was swept clean in thirty-six hours."—"We have been pounding away at these eastern forts now ever so long, and for not a few days at the southern,

and yet who can see the holes in them that a serene Pumpernickel could walk in at?" The worthy Pumpernickels of the Réservoirs forget what these forts surrounding Paris are. Avron was a thing by itself; the most stupendous blunder that a garrison containing a corporal of engineers ever perpetrated. But Mézières, Phalsburg, Toul, Verdun, Strasburg—all the squad of them, fell either of starvation or because the population of the towns around which the fortifications were built were being burnt and bombarded out. I believe, trusting to memory, that Strasburg is the only town in the fortifications of which were battered practicable breaches. The forts round Paris have no internal population; no houses to be burnt; no children to be blown up as they play in the gutter; no closure of their supplies either of food or ammunition. They have to be battered to bits on their own merits; and you don't batter to bits in a day works built and protected as they are. There seems no reason that, bar assault and bar panic, the bombardment of the Paris forts may not last as long as the food inside Paris. But there is starvation and starvation. There are few communities that would not arrive all the sooner at the conclusion that starvation pitch has been reached when a bombardment is going on around them, and occasionally into them, than if hunger pinched them in peace? Why does Paris hold out? Scarcely, surely, with the forlornest hope that it can ultimately escape the doom of capitulation; but to deserve well of the country of which it is the capital—to give time, by engaging the attention of so many of the enemy, for the provinces to resuscitate themselves—to earn for itself a name for enduring heroism to last unto all posterity. But Paris must be all but hopeless for itself, and in despair; the strain is so strong that sufferers are very fain to end it if they can decently. And nobody can deny that the defence of Paris, were Paris to capitulate to-morrow, has been one of the grandest episodes of modern warfare.

If it is not likely to be pleasant times for such French officers as have broken their parole when recaptured by the Germans, I think I would rather be in their plight than in that of the French officers who have deserted to the enemy, and who may be given up or retaken. A message was sent to St. Denis to acquaint the French chiefs with the fact of the apprehension of the three deserting officers of whom I have already written. Trochu sent back a grim and curt message:—"I am already acquainted with the disgraceful fact, and it would be a great kindness if you sent the scoundrels back into Paris, or, if there are obstacles to that, if you would yourselves shoot them."

The château of Villetaneuse has been occupied by Francs-tireurs instead of the Christian Linesmen who were in it, and the former lively gentlemen are keeping the foreposts on our front on the alert during the night. There is no more fraternizing now, no more interchange of field flasks or donations of sausage. These Francs-tireurs "prowl about" as cunningly as if they were in New Bond Street, and take pot-shots at sentries in the most uncivilized manner. In consequence they are not popular on the foreposts.

I am sorry to say drunkenness is on the increase in the German army besieging Paris. In the active campaign preceding the siege you would hardly ever see a man drunk; now hiccoughing gentlemen making a staggering exit from the shop tenanted by a *marketender* are far from uncommon. There is more than cause for this. The men in a siege get inexpressibly *ennuyé*, and somebody has said that the climax of *ennui* is delirium tremens or suicide. Perhaps even a stronger cause is the want of beer, and the consequent necessity, if a man drinks at all, to take glass after glass of rum, schnapps, or arrack. If you give a German plenty of beer, you seldom see him actively drunk. He may be passively muzzy; but with thirty or forty glasses inside him, he will go through his facings so as to satisfy the sharpest sergeant in the service. But spirits double him, unless he be an East Prussian or a Pole. The former can take a stint about equal, I reckon, to that of a seasoned Scotch Highlander; the latter reckons brandy no more than water. I marched, some three months ago, for two days with a company of the 63rd Regiment of Von Tümpling's Army Corps. They were all Poles; half of them spoke no intelligible German, and the raw spirits that they put out of sight, without so much as winking, struck me with abject amazement. We have little or no beer around Paris. A beer-lover myself, I know all the "sure finds" on the northern and eastern sides. And they do not number half a dozen. Now and then a few stray casks come to what may be called the out-quarters of beer. Yesterday, in this village, I saw, on a *marketender's* shutter, the label, "Bier!" conspicuously displayed. This was in the morning; in the afternoon the ticket had disappeared; the beer was drunk out, and disappointed men, who had come in from the neighbourhood on the strength of the winged report, were turning away muttering speeches the reverse of soft.

Jan. 14.—That comical major of Mobiles, who, when he was surprised at his dinner after dark in Ville Evrart, grumbled most furiously that such tactics were in violation of civilized warfare, and that there was a tacit understanding that after

sundown fighting should cease, expressed, I take it, pretty closely the general opinion on the subject of the defenders of Paris. They have not even elected to take advantage of fogs. Nay, Trochu has referred to fogs as standing in the way of his exertions, although most men would be inclined to think a fog was just the thing he would fervently pray for.

But last night witnessed a twofold conversion. Last night—to make a bull—the moon did not rise till the morning; last night was as dark as a wolf's mouth, and the fog besides was so thick, that in getting along you had almost to lean against it and press it out of your path. Last night, just after ten, I was quitting the field-post office in Margency, when I heard a sudden burst of heavy and close firing. As I stood listening, report after report came up the valley, that could only proceed from the big throats of the guns of the forts of St. Denis. Then there was a spurt of faint musketry fire, then a louder burst; the din between artillery and musketry gradually becoming continuous. It happened that in the afternoon I had been having a discussion with a staff-officer as to the likelihood of a sortie out of St. Denis, either towards Stains, Pierrefitte, or towards Epinay and Enghien. He took the view that the French, not being rank maniacs, would make no such attempt; I contended that a sortie in any direction being now an indication of mania, if seriously expected to succeed, there was, to the perception of the besieged, rather less insanity in coming out in this direction than any other. Was this sudden firing, I asked myself, my triumph over my friend of the Staff? It looked very like it from where I stood; but Margency is a deceptive place as regards sounds. So I took to the outside of my paragon of cobby screws, and trotted off to Montmorency as fast as I could.

Montmorency was "alarmed," but not turned out. The opinion of those I spoke to there was that Stains and Dugny were the objects of the attack, the noise of which was swelling louder and louder. There was no guide by eyesight. The fog was so dense that one could not have seen a shell burst 100 yards in front of him. Anyhow, whatever was going on was farther east than Montmorency, and the great guns of the St. Denis were in full swing. The way to Stains, if a man has any reasonable desire to get there whole, when the forts are firing, is to go to Arnouville and bend backward again by the road leading through Stains into Paris. When I got to Arnouville I had, therefore, overshot Stains, and still the noise of the musketry was south, a little east. It was not Dugny; that was too near. Was it possible that it could be that unfortunate Le Bourget again in trouble?

A passing orderly from Gonesse gave me the "office" opportunely. It was Le Bourget, and the French out of Drancy had been pitching into it ever since ten o'clock—it was now eleven. He did not know the dimensions of the attack, but judged it to be considerable from the noise it made. Well, I had ears of my own. "Was he carrying the alarm?" "Nein, Gott bewahre!" and he jogged on contentedly. I made the near cut through Dugny, and got into Le Bourget about half-past eleven o'clock. I cannot say it was a strange scene, for you could see hardly anything; but there was sufficient to engross other senses. Behind walls and in the shelter of the courtyards and their entrances stood the men of the 1st Battalion of the Queen Augusta Regiment, which had just been hurried up from Pont Iblon. They were in reserve, for they were not wanted. Shells were crashing in the already smashed and battered houses, and the rattle of musketry was incessant from the end of the village. I took it for granted that the old bone of contention, the railway station outside the village, and close to the Lille road, was what was being fought for, and cautiously ventured in that direction, intending to go as far as the barricade across the road. In the darkness I ran up against an officer standing out in the open coolly smoking a cigar. The officer was Major von Thummel, commanding the 2nd Battalion of the Queen Elizabeths, which formed the garrison of Le Bourget for the night. But there was no fighting for the railway station, for the unanswerable reason, as the Major explained, that no railway station exists now. It was pounded to splinters in December, and no longer affording any cover, the Guards utterly demolished it, and used the available wood to make their fires wherewithal. The Queen Elizabeths thus held the barricades on the roads, three of which diverge near the Paris end of the village, certain loopholed shelter being afforded by garden walls and sundry detached houses of great strength, which form a kind of suburb on the Paris side of the little brook Molleret, which passes through the village at right angles to its principal and indeed only street. They were mostly concentrated in these; one company, however, being in the houses farther back, to keep up the communication with the Augustas. The outermost posts were held by a company of the Guard Schützen Regiment, these extending away in exposed field-watches on the margin of the Molleret, to the left of Le Bourget, as one looks towards Paris.

There was a lull in the firing presently, as regards musketry at least, and so Major Thummel condescended to enter the doorway wherein I prowled, and give me the history of the even-

ing. It was not very eventful after all. Our outposts, it seems, as early as eight o'clock, had heard significant sounds in Drancy, which the French still obstinately refused to vacate. There were bugle calls and the tread of mustering men, and (so near are the positions) there could be heard also the tramp of men being marched across from Courneuve into Drancy. I must tell you, by the way, that this space, naturally a level plain almost bare of houses, has been furrowed by the French with three successive continuous lines of entrenchments. One interpretation is that they have so far sapped up towards Le Bourget; another is, that they have thus triplicated the defences of a tract they had judged to be exposed. Anyhow, the farther parallel touches with its left the Courneuve road at a point in advance of that village; comes with a slight sweep to the Lille road at a place where there are two or three houses; and is continued with a little more bend to the end of Drancy nearest Le Bourget. The second line has its left on Courneuve itself, and its right on the farm of Drancy, in the rear of the village of the same name. The *repli* line is the road from Courneuve to Bobigny. It was inside one of these lines that our foreposts heard the Frenchmen coming over into Drancy, to act as supports probably. A little before ten the guns—first of Aubervilliers, then of de l'Est, du Nord, and, last of all, of Romainville—began to shell Le Bourget furiously. Then two field batteries in the first French line between the Lille road and Drancy got to work, and suddenly, just after nine, came a splash of musketry fire out of the thick mist and darkness. The Queen Elizabeths knew what was coming. Their patrols had been out feeling the interval between Le Bourget and Drancy, and the advance of a strong body of French troops had been notified. Every man was under cover; every man had finger on trigger, and muzzle out to the front. So when the French fire came, the Elizabeths gave it back steadily and with interest; not acting so foolishly as to rush out to close quarters in the open, but lying snugly behind their stout barricades and the strong walls of the houses, and firing in the direction whence came the French fire. It seems no Frenchmen were visible. They were within a hundred yards, but they came no farther. After firing they stood for a while, then gave ground and fell back towards Drancy. Yet again, about eleven, they had come on, much the same features characterizing this attempt as the last. And now had they got enough, did I think? asked the Major; or did I think they were gluttons, and would come at it once more?

They answered his question, not I. Just as he spoke came the

"Steady, men!" from the officer by the barricade. There was a dull sound of tramping, sharpened by a few isolated shouts, and then a confused belch of musketry fire. I heard the officer by the barricades order—"Schnell feuer!" and *schnell* was, beyond a doubt, that same *feuer*. Nor were the French behindhand in their reply. One could hear the bullets pattering on the walls on the other side of the road, as if the fog had burst out into big hailstones. This steady firing lasted for some five minutes, then the French musketry fell away. In the comparative silence from the front there were audible easily the shouts of the officers, "*En avant!*" "*En avant!*" One officer—judging by the direction whence came the firing, he must have commanded the right—had a very shrill voice, and as he screamed rather than shouted, a wretched dog close by began to bark in opposition; whereat the Queen Elizabeths laughed consumedly behind their cover. Another officer—how I pitied the gallant fellows!—ranged from wrath to sorrow in his desperate efforts to make his men charge. "*En avant,*" he began, and repeated once or twice. "*Sacré nom de Dieu, en avant, canaille!*" and then he was ever so much nearer us, and must have dashed out to the front alone. "*Pour l'amour de Dieu en avant, mes enfants!*" But the *enfants* didn't see it. Indeed they did not see the propriety of staying where they were. I heard no command of retreat given, but the firing dropped away to a distance, and intermittingly, and then ceased altogether. At a quarter to one there was an advance on the other side from Courneuve, but, enfladed in the way as the troops composing it were by the guard field-watches on the Dugny road, they never got so close as the assailants from Drancy, nor did they hold their ground so stubbornly. Till three o'clock the forts continued their fire, then all was silent again. And so ended this sortie—if you can call it a sortie—against Le Bourget. German loss: one man of the Queen Augustas, two of the Queen Elizabeths severely wounded. The Augusta man has his shoulder smashed by a shell; three men of the Queen Elizabeths slightly wounded: no officer touched. Have I wasted your space—taken up a column and more with a trumpery affair in which one side had not a single man killed? But surely there must have been ever so many Frenchmen killed and wounded? you suggest. Perhaps there were—indeed, I don't see how it is possible that they should not have suffered considerably. But they left nothing behind them, except here and there a red patch of blood on the snow-covered ground. Patrols of the guards were beating the front all night, as well to ensure security as to pick up any

wounded men they might fall in with. They found none.

The French had carried off their dead and wounded.

Jan. 16.—I have heard many expressions of pain and indignation here on account of the utterly gratuitous falsehood put in circulation by the *Wiener Fremdenblatt*, to the effect that disagreements have occurred between the King of Prussia and the Crown Prince of Saxony, and that the King of Saxony is coming to Versailles with the design of soldering up the unpleasantness. I don't wonder at these expressions, although the falsehood is too apparent to merit anything but contempt. There has never been anything but the utmost cordiality between Versailles and Margency, and nobody can live long in familiar relations with the latter head-quarters without becoming aware how genuine and hearty is this cordiality as regards the chiefs of the Maas army, and—judging from every appearance—how reciprocal is the good feeling. Ever since I became acquainted with the composition of this head-quarters' staff, I have looked upon it as a really valuable and successful auxiliary in the actual and virtual unification of Germany. Here we have Saxon officers, Würtemberger officers, Prussian officers, officers of the late Hanoverian army, all working together in the most enthusiastic and genial manner, living together in the same quarters, associating round the same board, taking their daily rides together, and, in fine, blending so thoroughly, that the differences of what can scarcely with truth be called diverse nationality are utterly invisible. The same thorough blending is apparent right down the ladder till you come to the private soldiers; among whom it is as marked as higher up. Saxons, guardsmen, and Würtembergers, have stood to one another like men—like Germans—in more than two or three bloody tussles with the common enemy. They have shared the same bivouac; drunk out of the same bottle; and they are, in the words of the old song, “brethren all.” A large share of this thorough blending that has welded the Maas army into a consistent whole, from the staff to the field-watch, is due to the personal influence and personal attributes of the Crown Prince of Saxony himself—the commander of that army ever since it was first formed. The soldiers, who are the subjects of his father, speak of their Prince with a personal love and admiration which is right pleasant to listen to. “He is a gallant soldier and a true man,” said to me that wooden Under-officer Schultz, his woodenness disappearing for the moment when he came to talk of his Prince. And Prince Albert has likewise won the personal liking and respect of the whole of his army, besides that portion of it that comes

out of Saxony proper. The explanation is simple enough. He is a plain, frank, manly soldier; too fearless for the heir-apparent to a kingdom; utterly unskilled in Machiavelism, and, likely enough, quite blind to the advantages it may possess. His *métier* is to command the Maas army, and he does so with credit and distinction. My own estimate of his soldierly frankness and straightforwardness of purpose carries me on to this conviction—that if on any point there should ever occur any misunderstanding between him and those at Versailles, he is just the man to get into his little oak-painted carriage, start off for Versailles without an escort—there never was a more unassuming Prince in such respects as these—drop into the Préfecture, have a quiet talk over the trouble with the King—who is a man of much the same straightforward soldierly type as himself—put everything straight by that great institution, “word of mouth,” and drive back again to dinner here, nobody a whit the wiser; except, perhaps, his sagacious chief of the staff, General von Schlottheim. But it is all but impossible to conceive how a conjuncture demanding any such visit can arise. And of this all may be certain, that the good understanding between Margency and Versailles has never been ruffled by the most trivial difficulty.

A casual but wonderfully opportune evidence of the truth of what is above written has occurred since the paragraph was penned. There have been here a detachment of the Staff officials, to make quarters in this château for the deputation from the army which is to visit Versailles for the purpose of supporting the prayer of the Reichstag, that King William shall accept the Imperial crown of Germany. The headquarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony has been fixed upon as the rendezvous; and hither to-night come representatives of all grades from every German army in France. Here are the numbers: sixteen officers, twenty-six under-officers, and thirty-six honest men of the rank and file. My “humble roof” is called upon to afford accommodation for the sixteen officers, who have not yet turned up. I hear there are generals among them. It is a little curious how thus fortuitously I should come into close contact with the military deputation after having casually hit upon the civil one at Lagny, in its way home from Versailles. Monsieur Bourgeois, at the corner, has some very good cognac; and among Madame Sapey’s goods and chattels, of which I am the present beneficiary holder, is a jolly big punch-bowl. I have what the Irish call the “materials” in readiness for the advent of the deputation after a cold and wet ride; and it shall not be my fault if we do not make a night of it, and drink right heartily to the

Emperor of Germany. I believe the deputation is to wait on the Crown Prince of Saxony to-morrow morning to receive his formal and cordial congratulations as to the object of their mission ; after which they will proceed direct to Versailles.

CHAPTER XX.

WHILE a supreme human interest must be acknowledged to surround the circle within which, at the beginning of the New Year, two millions of people were suffering the heart-sickness of hope deferred, it was then obvious to all impartial observers, if not to the Parisians themselves, that their fate would be decided elsewhere than under the walls of their city. Early in January that indefatigable Minister of War, M. Gambetta, set no fewer than three great armies in motion for the deliverance of Paris by direct or indirect means. General Faidherbe, from whom probably least was expected, could, at any rate, manœuvre between the northern quadrilateral and Paris, and divert from Arras or St. Quentin the troops which might otherwise be employed against Ducrot or Vinoy. General Bourbaki was sent from Bourges to the east of France to raise the siege of Belfort, drive the besiegers back into the Rhine valley, and then advance on the eastern side of the Vosges, to destroy the main line of the German communications. But the most important task was reserved for General Chanzy, in whom M. Gambetta believed he had found one of those rare commanders raised up at great conjunctures to chastise the insolence of success and save his country. We have seen that on the 21st of December General Chanzy had regained Le Mans. The accounts transmitted from his head-quarters between that date and Christmas made the public wonder how it had been possible for him to deliver the battles which he had fought almost incessantly since the 4th of December. His men were shoeless and ragged, and many of them had lost all military sentiment. When the time came at which the truth might be told without prejudice to the cause of France, General Chanzy magnanimously repudiated the exaggerated terms in which M. Gambetta had thought it politic to describe his achievements ; but the more the truth is known about the material, the equipment, and the supply of his army during the first fortnight of December, the more credit will be given to its commander for the results which he was able to obtain with such an instrument. The Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, who went down to Corbeil to see the prisoners from the Army of the Loire after the battles before Orleans, wrote :—

The Germans speak of some of the fighting they have had as very severe; but it is clear that it is like the efforts of a desperate man, ignorant of fencing, to resist a well-trained antagonist by sheer force of will. The Mobiles have not been able to deal with troops so much more skilful than themselves. Why, take the mere matter of shooting, and remember that these Mobiles have been armed with breech-loaders long since their training began, and the training is but a few weeks old. Remember that the Germans have been carefully taught to fire to the best advantage for years past. It is a curious glimpse of Mobile organization to study the views of the prisoners on the reason of their ill-success. Most of them attribute what has happened to an utter want of supplies at critical moments, and to the ignorance of the officers in military affairs. They all declare that these officers of Gardes Mobiles did their duty manfully, so far as leading their men into fire went, but that they could not lead them out of fire in good order when the line fell back. That is as much as to say, that the discipline was not brought to a proper point. The officers were followed if they were known and liked, particularly if they hailed from the same town or village as most of their men. A stranger from another regiment, or, still worse, a Line officer coming among the Mobiles, would scarcely have been listened to at all. The Germans speak of the French guns as being well served but badly manœuvred, and say that a much larger average of shells explode now than formerly. The foreign rifles in the hands of the French are described as very effective arms. They have bought weapons abroad quite as good as their lost Chassepôts, and if they only knew how to use them, would do great execution. But the fire is rapid without being sufficiently superintended by the officers, and much ammunition is thrown away. There is altogether nothing to be ashamed of in the ill-fortune of a newly-organized force opposed to skilful veterans. But the second capture of Orleans reads us a lesson which cannot be too carefully read. Arming volunteers in haste with weapons that are new to them, calling out pensioners and militiamen to be massed into an army without sufficient means of transport or sufficient trained officers to weld the mass, is in France a last desperate measure. The Army of the Loire was brought into the field because France was in extremity. But for us to rely on beginning a war with much the same drawbacks, would be madness. Above all, we must foster a military train that shall be capable of taking into itself and regulating the vast resources of transport which we possess.

How the poor fellows who were to reinforce Chanzy's army, and enable it to advance once more against the trained corps of Prince Frederick Charles, were cared for before they were turned over to their commander, is shown in the following letter from Rennes, dated December 30:—

At the present moment the Camp of Conlie exists but in name.

Ever changing, modifying, suppressing, and creating, the delegation of Bordeaux, by the mouth of its effervescent Minister of War, has thought proper to raise the camp, after allowing several millions of francs to be spent upon it for defensive works. The troops who are now daily evacuating Conlie are to be dispersed, we hear, among various encampments, to be formed principally in Ile-et-Vilaine and Mayenne. It was lately announced that many were to be sent to an encampment formed on the Landes of Dingé, not far from Combourg. The site, however, not being suitable for the creation of a camp, we learn to-day that this project has been abandoned. Such of the Mobiles and Mobilisés of Conlie who were armed, have been sent to Le Mans to join the army of General Chanzy, which, it would appear, is growing more and more formidable every day. Some of the unarmed Mobiles have been sent to Fougeray-Langon, others, those of Loire-Inférieure, have been despatched to St. Malo, St. Servan, and many others are to be sent to the Landes of Izé, in the environs of Pertre, and no great distance from Vitré, and to Châteaugiron, Piré, and Janzé. They will thus be dispersed all over Brittany.

Here, at Rennes, we have had continual arrivals and departures, and have yet many Mobiles and Mobilisés in the town. The first detachment, which arrived about a week ago, when the temperature was even colder than it is now, were received by the military authorities, who had been informed several days beforehand of their coming, with the most shameful neglect and inattention. They reached Rennes in the afternoon, and until late at night rambled about the streets, cold and hungry, without any quarters being assigned them. Why did the authorities not lodge them in the various public edifices if they had no other quarters to give them? Surely it would have been better than to have allowed these fasting and frozen young fellows to sleep in the streets on the steps of the houses, and without so much as a handful of straw to protect them from the weather. When on the following morning the inhabitants of Rennes awoke, they were naturally very indignant, and the local newspapers loudly attacked the civil authorities, who, they imagined, were responsible for

the neglect with which the Mobiles had been treated. M. le Maire forthwith addressed a letter to the various local journals, in which he stated that on hearing that the arrival of some 8,000 or 10,000 Mobiles was to be expected in Rennes, the municipal administration immediately took measures to secure barracks, in various large unoccupied buildings, for them. It appears that when his arrangements were completed, he received a letter from the military authorities, informing him that measures had been taken by them for encamping the troops, and that his plans would not be carried out. Apparently, however, the military administration never moved in the matter. The day following that on which the first detachment of the Conlie Mobiles arrived here, a train from the camp brought in the 64th Regiment of *infanterie de marche*, composed of some 2,500 men. They were told to pitch their tents and encamp on the *Place*. Such an order was impossible to be executed. The ground was frozen so hard that they could not even plant the tent poles. These poor soldiers, frozen to death and fatigued with a long journey accomplished in trucks, were about to abandon the attempt to encamp in despair, when many of the inhabitants of Rennes, who were present, generously came forward and offered lodgings to these unfortunate victims of official neglect. Rich and poor, *bourgeois* and *ouvriers*, all came forward and offered one a bed, another a seat by his fireside, until all these neglected soldiers were lodged. In the night between Tuesday and Wednesday, at half-past eleven o'clock, the 3rd and 4th Battalions from Brest were assembled at the railway station at Conlie, and at five in the morning left for Rennes in cattle-trucks. On arriving at their destination, at 3 A.M., they received orders to encamp in the Champ de Mars, in the mud and water, for during the night there had been a general thaw. Both officers and soldiers declared that they would not pitch their tents and sleep in the pool—for, in consequence of the thaw, the Champ de Mars was all but a sheet of water. All were extremely astounded with their reception. The superior officers went and complained to the General commanding the subdivision, M. le Capitaine de vaisseau Lafon, who, two hours later, came and inspected the troops, and permitted them to encamp on the boulevards surrounding the Champ de Mars, where they were not much better off than before. Fresh detachments from Conlie arrive here every day, and much the same sort of thing as I have just mentioned still occurs. To see these brave young fellows, their uniforms in disorder, and covered with dirt, wearing ponderous sabots, wandering at hazard through the streets,

all apparently overcome with *ennui*, some coughing so badly that they can hardly stand, is indeed a pitiable sight. Out of these sinewy and robust young fellows, the finest soldiers in the world might have been formed ; but official neglect and mismanagement have so generally debased them, that it would be far more prudent to predict their utter ruin and incapacity, than to assert that they are capable of sustaining any serious engagement. We have had enough now of the *levée en masse*, and the glorious souvenirs of '92. M. Gambetta, with his insalubrious camps and idiotic system of herding together unarmed men under the command of intriguing generals, has simply ruined the constitution of many thousands, and rendered them totally unfit for soldiers. To think that he has decreed the formation of eleven such camps as Conlie, and that at one time he proposed assembling together in the cold this winter—and doubt less in inactivity, as no arms are to be had—all the married men of France !

Before the old year had expired it had begun to be remarked at Orleans, where Prince Frederick Charles had his headquarters, that “mischief was brewing.” Reports reached the Prince’s staff that the people were greatly excited by new expectations, and while the character of these was being discussed, a kind of challenge from General Chanzy to the German army was forwarded through the commandant of Vendôme, who had received it under a flag of truce. This communication was in the following terms :—

“To the Prussian Commandant at Vendôme,—I am informed that violence, for which I can find no language suitable to express my indignation, has been resorted to by the troops under your command against an innocent population of St. Calais, notwithstanding their good treatment of your sick and wounded. Your officers have extorted money and authorized pillage. This is an abuse of power which will weigh upon your conscience, though patriotism may enable our countrymen to bear it. But it cannot be permitted that you should add to this injury a gratuitous insult. You have alleged that we are defeated. This is false. We have fought and held you in check since the 4th of December. You have dared to treat as towards men who could not answer you, pretending that they submitted to the will of the Government of National Defence in resisting when they really wished for peace. I am justified in protesting against this statement by the resistance of the whole of France, and by the resistance of the army, which up to the present time you have not been able to conquer. We re-assert what our struggle has already taught you ; we shall struggle

on, conscious of our good right, and determined to triumph at any cost. We shall struggle on à *outrance*, without truce or mercy. It is now no longer a question of fighting against a loyal enemy, but against devastating hordes, whose sole object is the ruin and humiliation of a nation fighting for the preservation of its honour, its independence, and the maintenance of its rank."

"You reply to the generosity with which we treat your prisoners and wounded by insolence, by arson, and by pillage. I protest with indignation, in the name of humanity and the law of nations, which you trample under foot."

The Prince was informed that this protest had been read three times to the French troops on parade, by order of General Chanzy. It was inferred from these facts and reports that with aid from the west, and perhaps from the south, Chanzy was about to commence some new movement for the relief of Paris, and, severe as the weather was, it was resolved to march out and meet him. Accordingly dispositions were made for a gradual concentration towards Vendôme, and for the first three days of the new year the roads from Orleans leading in that direction were covered, as far as the eye could see, with infantry, cavalry, and train. The 10th German Corps guarded the advanced positions on the Loir, occupying Blois and Vendôme, and the country between. Von der Tann's Bavarians were resting near Orleans. The 9th Corps held Orleans with detachments before it and higher up the Loire. The 3rd Corps were higher up the river towards Gien. It was intended that these various corps should advance by different roads towards the line of the Loir, drive back the French before Vendôme, find out the army of Chanzy, overthrow it, and, taking Le Mans, destroy all hope of the relief of Paris by the troops of the West. The 18th Division (9th Corps) was to reach the Loir at Morée, and, having cleared the way, prepare to act as a reserve. The 3rd Corps were to cross the river near Vendôme, while the 10th were to march to La Chartre, and be ready to turn Chanzy's right, and then join the other corps in the battle before Le Mans. The Duke of Mecklenburg, who was at Chartres, was to advance and drive in Chanzy's left. Duke William of Mecklenburg, with the 6th Cavalry Division, was to keep the left of the Prince's forces; the 2nd Cavalry Division was to maintain the communication between the 9th Corps, which formed the Prince's right, and the left of the Duke of Mecklenburg's army. The 4th Cavalry Division was to protect the Grand Duke's right, and the 5th was to keep watch in the country north of his line of march. On the 4th of January Prince Frederick Charles moved his head-quarters to

Beaugency, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg being still at Chartres. The 3rd Corps was by that time concentrated at and around Marchenoir; the 18th Division was near Orleans, the 19th at Blois, and the 20th at Vendôme.

On the 5th the Prince moved to Oucques; the 3rd Corps having their head-quarters in the same place. The 18th Division moved up from Orleans to Ouzouer-le-Marché, and took its place on the right of the force under the immediate command of the Prince. The 20th was still before Vendôme, skirmishing with General Chanzy's advanced posts, and the 19th moved up from Blois towards St. Amand. The Grand Duke advanced from Chartres southwards to Illiers.

On the 6th Prince Frederick Charles marched from Oucques to Vendôme, just on the other side of which the 10th Corps was seriously engaged with the French before the Forest of Vendôme, supported by the 3rd Corps, which had advanced that day from Marchenoir. The opposition was greater than the Germans had expected, the French fighting better than usual. The fire of musketry was hot in the front, but the Germans—Hanoverians and Brandenburgers—pressed on, until their artillery and needle-guns had borne down all opposition, and their leading division had reached a rivulet between Azay and Villiers. On the right, the 18th Division had reached Morée, on the Loir, north of Vendôme. While this engagement was going on, Duke William of Mecklenburg fell in with considerable forces of the French on the left, near Villerporcher, and was unable to proceed. This obstruction made it necessary to send General Hartmann, with a cavalry division and a brigade of infantry from the 10th Corps, in the direction of St. Amand, whereupon the French troops in that quarter fell back towards Tours, and were transported by railway to Le Mans. On the same day the Grand Duke marched with the 17th Division to Brou, the 22nd advancing to La Loupe and La Fourche.

On the 7th the weather changed from frost to thaw, and a mist made it necessary for the Germans to advance with caution. The 10th Corps remained stationary until the attack on Duke William had been repulsed, but the 5th and 6th and 18th Divisions advanced steadily, occasionally coming in contact with the rear-guards of the French columns. By nightfall the first two of the three Divisions had reached the line of the Braye, at Savigny and Sargé, and the last was at Epinay. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg moved his head-quarters to Beaumont-les-Autels, the 17th Division being at Authon, and the 22nd at Nogent-le-Rotrou. On the 8th the ground was again frozen, and the Prince moved his head-quarters to St. Calais, where he had the 5th and 6th Divisions not far in front of him,

on each side of the high road, the 18th Division being just behind Illiers. The 10th Corps, having pushed aside the obstacles to its advance, was at La Chartre on the Loir, on its way to Le Mans. To connect La Chartre with St. Calais, a detachment of six squadrons of cavalry, one battalion of infantry, and six guns, was formed, and placed under the command of General Schmidt. On the same day, the 8th, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg reached La Ferté St. Bernard with his entire infantry corps; the 4th Cavalry Division marched down the Huisne to Bellême; the 2nd kept up the communication between the Grand Duke's and the Prince's corps; and the 5th was on the Grand Duke's right.

On the 9th the roads were once more as hard as iron with frost, and covered with ice, which remained for days, and made the cavalry all but useless in the actions which were to result in the capture of Le Mans. The Prince's head-quarters were this day moved to Bouloire. Both divisions of the 3rd Corps were at Ardenay and along the line of the Narrais. The 18th Division was with the Prince; the 19th about Vancé; the 20th at Grand Lucé. The Grand Duke moved with the 17th Division to Le Luard, near Connerré, the 22nd occupying Sceaux, on the main road, six miles in advance of La Ferté. The German army was now within fighting distance of Le Mans. The Prince had in front of him an army whose force had been stated in telegrams from Bordeaux of a week before at 200,000 men, but was rated by the Germans at the time as 160,000, and has since been affirmed by English correspondents at General Chanzy's head-quarters to have been 118,000. The armies of Prince Frederick Charles and the Duke of Mecklenburg numbered only 85,000, although in telegrams sent to Bordeaux from Le Mans they were reported to reach a strength of 180,000. But both men and horses were in the finest condition, and the service of the supply departments was admirably performed. The 9th Corps had very recently shown its marching powers, by having advanced on the 16th and 17th of December more than fifty English miles in twenty-four hours. The men were much attached to the Prince, their commander, who on the 9th marched with them for twelve miles with the greatest ease. The ground in front of Le Mans is of such a conformation that it has been declared impossible for any general to take up a bad defensive position there. General Chanzy's army held a series of wooded heights, which he had had plenty of time to fortify. His men were armed with breech-loading rifles from the United States, of a pattern far surpassing the needle-gun, and he moreover was well supplied with the Gattling gun, a mitrailleuse firing a

heavier projectile than that used in the Imperial army early in the campaign.

On the 10th, Prince Frederick Charles ordered General Alvensleben to lead the 3rd Corps, his Brandenburgers, from Ardenay, and clear the principal road to Le Mans, nearly up to the Huisne, behind which the French had taken up their position. The General ordered three of his brigades to advance by different forest-tracks and meet at night at Changé, while the fourth pushed on as far as Champagne. One of these three brigades, the 9th, met a French corps in the woods near Chelles, and drove them back towards Parigné, when the commander of the 10th Brigade, attracted by the firing, came up, and seized the opportunity to attack Parigné, capturing two mitrailleuses and many prisoners.

The 10th Brigade next attacked Changé, and there ensued an engagement of the most desperate character. The men fought for hours from bank to bank and from field to field. Hundreds had fallen on both sides, under a prolonged rifle and shrapnel fire, and Changé was still held with great tenacity by the French, when the 10th Brigade came up and made a flank attack on the village, which gave the Germans possession of the place. The action on the 10th is by the Germans distinguished as the battle of Changé: the engagements of the 11th and 12th are called the battles of Le Mans.

On the morning of the 11th, the French watched the enemy from a position which might well be deemed impregnable. A curving range of hills forms a vast natural parapet before Le Mans, having the river Huisne for its wet ditch. On this parapet the French had placed guns and mitrailleuses side by side, more thickly planted than the Germans had ever before seen in the campaign. All the bridges over the river were in their hands. The grand *chaussée* from St. Calais and Vendôme was that by which the Prince's 18th Division was advancing, but the river is fenced off from the road by a range of hills, running from the north-east towards Le Mans, but meeting the Huisne at Yvré. The Prince had only three Divisions, the 5th and 6th of the 3rd Corps, and the 18th of the 9th Corps with him, for the Grand Duke had not advanced so rapidly as had been hoped for, and the 10th Corps, detained at Montoire, had got no farther than Mulsanne and Ruaudin, on the south-westerly road from Le Mans. The wisdom of secrecy in war was never more manifest than in the operations of this day, for it may safely be affirmed, that had the French known the real number of the force opposed to them, they would never have permitted their position to be taken. Their ignorance, or

at least the possibility of deceiving them by an audacious movement, was one of the elements in the calculations of the German commander, who might have been attacked with a fair chance of success, had the French been well served by spies. The Prince ordered the 18th Division to carry the hills above Champagne, and sent the 5th and 6th Divisions, forming the 3rd Corps, against the Huisne. The 3rd received the order to advance on the 14th, in the middle of the day. Their numbers could not have exceeded 18,000 men, for they left Orleans only 22,000 strong, and had been fighting ever since. They advanced, however, against the great natural rampart, held by 50,000 men, over ground covered with woods, and intersected with lanes separated from them by ditches and banks. The woods were filled with French riflemen, and beyond the river, in front, were the French artillery and mitrailleuses. Alvensleben's brigades advanced, the 10th going northward to try and gain the road to Le Mans by Savigné, and the 11th marched upon Château-les-Noyers, about 500 yards from the Huisne; the 12th was sent to attack Yvré, and the 9th was held in reserve. The 11th, in executing its orders, soon found itself enveloped in a perfect tempest of fire from the French batteries on the hill opposite Château-les-Arches. After the battle not a tree could be found that was not marked with balls. The 11th was compelled to give way, and the 12th, recalled from Yvré, was sent to its assistance. The latter attacked Les Arches and drove the French out; but when the divisional artillery was brought up, it was found impossible to hold the position in face of the French fire. In the evening the 8th Regiment was sent forward from the reserves to its assistance, as a French force of 25,000 was pushing forward. It was afterwards found that the latter had been sent forward to secure the road by which the French force retreating from before the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg might enter Le Mans. The 3rd Corps had not been able to accomplish the task assigned to it. It had fought gallantly all day, and held its own against fearful odds, but that was all. The 18th Division, however, which held the main road from Vendôme, had been more fortunate, and had carried the heights above Champagne. The Germans, disappointed with their tactical achievements, did not know what advantages they had really gained this day. While Alvensleben was vexing himself in his quarters, General Chanzy was writing a despatch announcing his own defeat. In the course of the night he telegraphed from Le Mans to Bordeaux the following message to M. Gambetta:—

“ Our positions were good last night, excepting at La Tuillerie, where the Mobiles of Brittany disbanded themselves, thereby causing the abandonment of the positions we occupied on the

right bank of the Huisne. Vice-Admiral Jauréguiberry and the other generals think a retreat is necessary under these circumstances. I resign myself to it very unwillingly."

On the morning of the 12th the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, who had fought a successful action at Connerré, was able to move his own head-quarters to Montfort, his 17th Division being at Corneille, and the 22nd at La Croix. The French had already begun their retreat; the guns had almost all disappeared from the hills; nevertheless, as a matter of prudence, General Chanzy had ordered an attack on Les Noyers, which, in the prevailing uncertainty, and after the heavy loss of life on the previous day, caused some anxiety to the Germans. The attack, however, was repulsed; the 6th Division took Yvré; while the 10th Corps, which had completed its toilsome march along slippery roads, and was joined by General Schmidt's detachment, after some fighting at Château de la Pallière, reached the heights above Le Mans, and threw some shells into the town on the retreating columns of the French. The 5th Division followed in the same direction, and the Germans passed into Le Mans. They encountered some opposition, the French firing upon them from houses, and it was only on the following day, January 13, that Prince Frederick Charles thought it prudent to remove his head-quarters to the captured town. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg was sent towards Alençon. The 18th Division pushed on, and occupied the entrenched camp at Conlie. The 10th Corps was sent on towards Laval, but found the bridges broken up, and was not sufficiently strong to overcome such opposition as Chanzy's troops were still able to offer. At Le Mans and Conlie an enormous quantity of arms, ammunition, food, and—what was even of more consequence—railway materials and rolling stock, fell into the hands of the Germans. On the 16th Prince Frederick Charles reported that, in the engagements from the 6th of January to that date, he and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg had taken from the enemy more than 22,000 unwounded prisoners, two colours, nineteen guns, and more than a thousand loaded conveyances, besides a large quantity of arms, ammunition, and war material. The Army of the Loire was broken up, and with it Paris had lost its best hope of relief. The Germans had fought well, and had gained immense results with means relatively small. They owed these in no small degree to the masterly strategy of their commander. Prince Frederick Charles had applied against Chanzy the principles which had succeeded against Benedek in the Bohemian campaign—had made a double attack upon the enemy, the one line at right angles to the other. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's Corps had not been moved directly against Le Mans from Chartres, but had been required

to make a détour, so as to descend in a northerly direction, and compel Chanzy's army to present two fronts. This mode of operating implies a certain contempt for the enemy, for it offends against the rule of attacking with superior numbers. But the capacity of a commander is shown by his knowing when a rule must be observed, and when for sufficient reasons it may be set aside.

The complexion of affairs at Le Mans and in the West during these momentous occurrences was thus described by the Special Correspondent sent out to General Chanzy's Army, in a letter dated January 6 :—

Despite all that has been said about the mistrust and resentment with which the French are supposed to regard all foreigners at the present moment, I can avouch that I never travelled with a more polite and communicative party of men than my *compagnons de route* between St. Malo and Rennes. Consisting, as they did, of an officer in the ex-Imperial army, on his way to join General Bouëdec ; a dealer in arms, returning from Birmingham to Nantes ; a Franc-tireur from Mézières ; a Breton captain of the Garde Mobile ; and the chaplain attached to his corps, one might have fairly expected a considerable divergence in their respective political opinions. But so far from this being the case, they were unanimous in their resolve to do their best towards driving the invader from the soil of France, and equally so in shelving all questions as to the future government of the country, until the happy result above indicated had been accomplished. With regard to local matters the same unanimity prevailed. All deeply regretted the resignation of Keratry, whose name was a tower of strength in this part of the country, and who it appears has been driven out of office by the machinations of his enemies. The frightful destitution which existed at the camp of Conlie, where hapless recruits were herded together up to their knees in mud, and had to pass entire days without food of any kind, was declared to be no fault of the Count's, but entirely due to the indifference and even enmity of those appointed to second him. The fact of arms having been issued to these men and withdrawn a few hours afterwards to be despatched southward, was set down to fear on the part of Gambetta lest the thousands of Bretons assembled at Conlie should hoist the white standard of Henri Cinq ; and therefore the arms in question have been sent to the south of France, to arm those enthusiastic patriots who have, up to the present, confined their efforts on behalf of their oppressed country to parading the streets of their respective towns with red flags and drums

ad libitum, and in screeching the "Marseillaise." This act of suicidal folly was in reality quite uncalled for: as the "Breton bretonnant" on my right observed, "We are all fighting now for France, not for a King or a Republic"—which sentiment was received with unqualified approval by his companions. The Franc-tireur des Ardennes, who informed us with due solemnity that he had entered his corps for the sole purpose of being killed on account of a love affair, and who, having failed to accomplish his object in the neighbourhood of Mézières, was on his way to seek better success on the banks of the Loire, remarked, in the quietest way possible, that he had put an end to the existence of no less than eight Uhlans, and exhibited, with legitimate pride, the *spolia opima* of a departed Prussian officer killed by him, in the shape of a very neatly-fitting pair of cavalry boots at that moment adorning his lower limbs. Every one, even the chaplain, seemed to regard the slaughter of the original proprietor as of no more moment than the killing of a barn-door fowl; but the boots, as a trophy won from the enemy, were examined with great interest. The officer, who is attached at present to the staff of General Bouëdec, and is on his way to join that commander at Le Mans, then narrated some of the high-handed proceedings on the part of the Prussians which are taking place daily in the Ardennes, the district from which he hails, and which he has revisited in disguise since his escape from Sedan. It appears that the soldiers of King William have for some time past been engaged in cutting down all the oaks in the forests belonging to the French Government, and in endeavouring to find a purchaser for the timber. In this search they have been hitherto unsuccessful, owing to the refusal of the Belgian Government to allow the property in question to be conveyed through its territory, and they now threaten to burn all rather than allow it to return into the hands of its original owners, for they really have no use for it themselves. Opposite the village of Douzy a train happened to run off the main line into a siding, owing to a mistake made in turning the points by a signalman. This signalman, like all the *employés* on the line in question, happens to be a Prussian, but such a fact did not hinder the authorities of that nation from seizing two of the principal inhabitants of the village and threatening to shoot them unless a fine of 6,000 francs were paid by the community. The village, however, was a very poor one, and could not manage to raise a larger amount than 2,000 francs, which sum was in the end accepted as sufficient.

These facts I have on the authority of Monsieur le Capitaine Entz, late of a cuirassier regiment, and at present aide-de-

camp to General Bouëdec. Thanks to the kindness of this gentleman, I was enabled to reach Le Mans from Rennes without difficulty, for the line being closed to civilians from Laval onwards, he included me in his requisition for places, and thus spared me the necessity of hiring a carriage of some kind at the latter place in order to continue my journey. On arriving at Le Mans, at two in the morning, we vainly endeavoured to obtain sleeping accommodation at half a dozen hotels, and were finally forced to return to the station, where we passed the remainder of the small hours ensconced in a railway carriage, the booking offices, waiting-rooms, &c., being crammed with soldiers in a similar plight to ourselves. Some of these unhappy fellows were complaining loudly, but I am happy to say that the great majority bore the discomfort with placid equanimity, and set it all down to the fortune of war. Le Mans is crowded with troops of every description, the majority, however, being Mobiles from Brittany. Their arms and equipment, as may be expected, are of very varied character; the Remington appears to be the most prevalent weapon, though I noticed several Sniders lying about the station, more than one of which bore the impression, "Tower, 1870," and the British Government stamp. One has a right to wonder how these came there, but I intend refraining from all indiscreet questions till I have seen General Chanzy.

Jan. 8.—The town of fat pullets—for the *poularde du Mans* is held in as high estimation amongst our neighbours as the fowl of Dorking amongst ourselves—is at present swarming with a bird of somewhat different breed, the French fighting cock. De Chanzy's head-quarters are established in a house fronting the handsome Gothic Préfecture, and his followers are to be met with in every direction; the streets literally swarm with them—Linesmen who have lost the natty smartness which distinguishes the French soldier in the piping times of peace; sturdy Marines, both infantry and artillery; Mobiles and Mobilisés equipped in varied fashions, and a few dashing-looking Papal Zouaves, in their elegant uniform of grey and scarlet. Cavalry, however, are lacking, for, with the exception of some gendarmes, they have been despatched to the front. Some dismounted cuirassiers, in long grey cloaks and forage caps, lounge disconsolately about, apparently regretting the absence of their four-footed companions; and a few sons of the desert, muffled to the teeth in scarlet burnouses, stalk with Oriental gravity through the crowd, or dash past perched on the high-backed saddles with which their steeds are furnished. All day long trains of carts and waggons laden with stores and provisions roll through the streets, whilst smartly

got up ambulances, belonging to private societies, mixed with the ruder and more battered vehicles of this character attached to the military hospitals, are to be seen on every open plot of ground. The station yard is alternately filled and emptied with arriving and departing battalions, for whose accommodation numerous vendors of hot coffee, sausages, bread, woollen socks, blankets, and those blue or scarlet flannel sashes so dear to the French soldier, have established themselves in a long row of wooden sheds erected along one side of it. Scores of boys are clustered in this particular neighbourhood, each equipped with a stock-in-trade consisting of a square box, a pot of grease, and a brush, and drive a roaring trade in cleaning and greasing the boots and holding the horses of the officers; for the officers of every rank are really great in the matter of boots. The sturdy old-fashioned Linesman with the close-cropped hair, long tight redingote and Crimean medal, contents himself with a pair of ordinary stout wellingtons, reaching to just below the knee, whilst the Marine officers are mostly furnished with a capital combination of boot and gaiter in one, made of untanned leather, and certainly the very thing for an infantry man. But the dandies of the Mobiles and the Staff soar to the height of extravagance in russia and enamelled leather, and encase their nether limbs in the most fantastic productions of the followers of St. Crispin. Some reaching far above mid thigh, and adorned with numerous straps and buckles, intended to maintain them in position, are worn *pro tem.* turned down almost to the ankle, in order to display their scarlet lining to the admiring gaze of all beholders. Owing to the varied sources from which uniforms of all kinds have had to be obtained, a considerable diversity prevails amongst these also, and a *tenue de fantaisie*, which usually consists of a long jacket, frog-and-fur trimmed, with a gold aiguillette, is greatly in favour amongst the officers. The privates whom I have seen, though equipped in a very varied fashion, are mostly comfortably clad, and are far better off with respect to shoes than recent accounts might have led one to expect. The cloth of some of their uniforms is unmistakably shoddyish, but a good upper benjamin covers a multitude of sins of this kind, and those unprovided with the comfortable regulation *capote* have supplemented this deficiency either by a sheepskin cloak, or by a wonderful and almost indescribable garment of no shape in particular, and constructed of a material apparently a cross between that of horse-cloths and flour sacks. Hundreds of these sartorial triumphs are offered for sale in every direction. *En somme*, the best equipped troops are those of the Marine infantry and

artillery, and the gendarmes, which latter have laid down their civil functions, and taken to the field once more.

As might be expected, the presence of so large a number of troops renders the town extremely lively during the daytime, though the prefectorial regulation that all cafés, &c., must be closed by nine in the evening causes a singular contrast after that hour has struck. As for the inhabitants, they do not appear in the slightest degree afflicted by the sufferings of their unhappy country; on the contrary, a profound indifference appears to prevail amongst them, very different indeed to the enthusiasm manifested in the more western departments. Several officers have loudly declared that a visit from the Prussians would be about the best thing that could happen to the Manceaux, since it would teach them to be a little more attentive to those who are risking their lives for France, whilst at the same time remarking that, should such a visit take place, they no doubt would be received with the same servility that has been shown by several municipalities in Normandy. Several of the local journals are filled with those severe personal criticisms upon the members of the Government of Defence which are happily unknown amongst us, and one of these reactionary organs is at present trying to get up a panic, on the ground that, the railways being exclusively used for military purposes, the town is no longer able to obtain a supply of provisions from the surrounding districts, and consequently a famine is imminent. The shopkeepers, however, are far from expressing similar views; they view the influx of military visitors with a certain amount of satisfaction; and no wonder, for they regard all as fish that comes to their net, and spoil the Philistine and the Israelite with the most perfect impartiality. This is only natural, since they know not how long the harvest will last; and the truth is, that although communication has suffered considerably, a decree of the Minister of the Interior, which has just been issued, calling on the Compagnie des Chemins de Fer de l'Ouest to run a certain number of luggage and passenger trains a day, will cause this to be remedied.

Jan. 10.—The glorious example set by Brittany has not found many imitators in the adjoining provinces. We all know how the inhabitants of Normandy have acted, and those of Maine and Anjou appear perfectly ready to imitate them in case of necessity. The peasantry of these districts display the characteristics of the "frugal swain" *par excellence*. Their constant care is to increase their store in every possible manner, but as to following to the field some warlike lord, nothing can be farther from their intentions. Were it not for

the abominable requisitions, they would, perhaps, regard the contest with rather a favourable eye than otherwise. These requisitions are their *bête noire*, and I have heard numerous stories, many of them from eye-witnesses, of their having burnt hay and corn and killed horses rather than allow them to be pressed into the service of their country. Situate as they are, "between the devil and the deep sea," or, in other words, between the French and the Prussians, their position is certainly not an enviable one; but it would really appear, from all the accounts one hears, that the soldiers of King William are the only ones who come in for the small share of politeness they deign to manifest. "If," remarked an officer, in presence of a large assembly of his colleagues, "you are riding in the country, and ask a peasant if there is any news, he invariably answers in the negative. 'But,' say you, 'there was a fight close by here yesterday.'—'Oh, yes.'—'Which side won?'—'Don't know.'—'Are there any Prussians in the neighbourhood?'—'Don't know.'—'They say there is a battalion of them in the village yonder. Is it so?'—'It may be so.' And if you ride on into a village filled with them you may be sure no one will warn you back." And this statement was confirmed with one voice by his comrades present. "The Prussians get whatever they want, whilst our men are left to starve in the streets," is a continual cry. The enmity existing between the peasants and the *Francs-tireurs*, who, by uselessly attempting to defend open villages, have drawn down the wrath of the enemy upon the unfortunate inhabitants, is easily explicable; but even this does not excuse the utter lack of even a spark of patriotism. Of course the Republicans set all this down to the degrading effects of twenty years of the Imperial régime. By the way, speaking of *Francs-tireurs*, it appears that the gentry of the various Free Corps quartered in this neighbourhood have been carrying on matters with rather a high hand lately, as is shown by a recent general order placing them under strict military control. Let us hope that the misdeeds set down to their account are rather due to the Prussians, who, according to a letter addressed to the *Moniteur* by an eye-witness, an American gentleman, are in the habit of disguising themselves as *Francs-tireurs*, and in that costume committing all manner of atrocities.

This, indeed, is universally admitted, as is also their great superiority in the matter of discipline and the good that results therefrom. The French officers of the regular army, who have been so fortunate as to have hitherto escaped captivity, all frankly acknowledge this, and deplore the fact that it is impossible for them to maintain a like degree of order amongst

the men under their command. As night descends the Prussian camps become silent as the grave; every one there knows his place, and where to obtain whatever he wants; while the French are in a continual uproar for hours after darkness has fallen, crying out for quartermasters, sergeant-majors, and fourriers, food, fuel, water, &c. As to actual fighting, the French cling to the idea that, at close quarters, with the bayonet, they are infinitely superior to their adversaries, but that at the game of long bowls the artillery fire of these latter is unmatchable. "They get their range at once, and when once they have it they knock us over like ninepins. Nothing was ever seen like it." As to the Uhlans—by which term they imply the Prussian cavalry in general—they affirm that they have been considerably reduced in number since the commencement of the war, a service due in a great measure to certain corps of *Francs-tireurs* who have taken their mission seriously. The *Spahis*, too, have been employed against them with some success. There is no doubt that whatever violations of the laws of property may have been committed by the invaders, their progress has been marked by a scrupulous respect for female honour. A few isolated cases of assault may have occurred, but all who have been brought into contact with them are willing to render them due justice in this particular. Indeed, I find a spirit of frankness and a readiness to do justice to the foe, and to admit the shortcomings of the French army, prevalent amongst almost all the officers I have met. The lesson of defeat has certainly not been lost upon them. They are to be distinguished by an utter absence of brag, and a calm resolution to do their best. They are the most truthful and modest of Frenchmen, contrasting favourably with those shameless and wanton liars, the journalists. The golden rule at present is never to believe a single word you may see in print, but to trust entirely to your eyes, ears, and powers of cross-examination. The latest *canard* published here is so amusing that I cannot forbear reproducing it. It is to the effect that the Prussians in garrison at Metz are so reduced in number that any one desiring to leave the town is first carefully rendered insensible by means of chloroform, and in that condition conveyed through the lines, so that he may not perceive and report the deficiency of guards at the various posts. And there are men who believe these stories, though, I am happy to say, they do not gain universal credit. The influence of the French press has been steadily decreasing since the war began, and people begin now to judge for themselves a little more than of yore.

As to the prospects of an ultimate success for France, con-

siderable diversity of opinion prevails. The Bretons of all classes are hopeful and enthusiastic, but many of their comrades from other provinces, when interrogated on this subject, look grave and shake their heads. Many of the private soldiers are getting discouraged, and if the civil population of Mans does not cry for peace openly, it does not hesitate to acknowledge that it is thoroughly weary of war. There is great difficulty in collecting the taxes; the people cannot or will not pay, and if the sinews of war fail, things cannot go on much longer. "Why does not England interfere?" is a common question; but the questioner frequently answers it himself by remarking that she dares not. Indeed, the position of an Englishman in France at present is about as unenviable as can be conceived. As to news, it is impossible to communicate any. All that transpires is contained in the official telegrams, which you receive in London before they are published here. We know fighting is going on along our front, and we hear the French have gained slight advantages, but it will hardly be believed that this information reaches us from Bordeaux. The reason of this is, that all reports are sent there by our commanders, and only so much of them as the Government chooses to make known is telegraphed to the prefects for publication.

10 A.M.—A number of troops have been marching through the streets whilst I have been writing, and I hear from an officer arrived from General Jouffroy's division, that though the advantage in fighting has been on the side of the French, they have been obliged for strategic reasons to fall back from some of their advanced positions. It is said that General Chanzy is about to leave the town, so I am going out to obtain further news.

6 P.M.—Great emotion has prevailed here throughout the latter portion of the day. At an early hour in the afternoon the General left the town for an unknown destination. As my attempts to fathom this destination only led to my being arrested three times, I have been forced to content myself with looking sharply about me with my mouth shut. Ambulance trains, baggage waggons, and provision carts are pouring out of the town in the direction of Vendôme, the troops having preceded them at an early hour this morning. Cannon have been heard from this quarter for the last hour, and those who profess to judge the distance from the sound maintain that fighting is going on within three leagues of this place. The railway keeps bringing in troops from the rear, and hurrying them forward to the front; the streets in the neighbourhood of the station are blocked up with strag-

glers desirous of joining their corps; the bells are tolling in all the church steeples; but whether this has anything to do with the defence of Le Mans, or is merely some private operation on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities, I hardly care, after my morning's experience, to ask. The gendarmes in garrison here have all turned out, and are pacing the streets in pairs, carbine in hand, for the first time since I have been here, which shows that something serious is in the wind. Men and women are standing in groups at all the corners. Whatever may have occurred, it has come to pass suddenly, for this morning at ten o'clock everything was quiet. Ten thousand men from Laval have gone to the front during to-day.

8 o'clock.—News at last. A wounded soldier has just come in, and an officer who brings news that the fighting is at Ivre and Ardenay, but the result is undecided. It seems the Prussians drove us back yesterday a little, and that we are trying to retake the positions we lost. We have three divisions engaged. The 16th, 17th, and 21st Corps and over three hundred guns are massing in front of Le Mans.

Jan. 14.—Le Mans to-day is in a state of indescribable excitement. The Prussian troops have mostly quitted the town, though Prince Frederick Charles is still established in the Préfecture, and cannon-firing is audible, apparently from the direction of Conlie. When one adds to this the fact of rumours flying about to the effect that both Arras and Paris have capitulated; that Chanzy has despatched two *parlementaires* with full powers to treat for the unconditional surrender of his entire army; that Bourbaki's forces have been cut to pieces; and that Gambetta has been assassinated, it may be well conceived that the unhappy Manceaux are in a state of mental confusion. To add to this, the Maire of the town has departed for regions unknown, leaving his hapless *concitoyens* to arrange the little matter of enforced contributions as best they can. The small sum of four millions of francs has been demanded from them, with sundry dark hints as to requisitions in kind to follow. Individually, however, they seem to accept matters with a certain amount of tranquillity. The Prussians are there, and the principle that what cannot be cured had better be endured seems to prevail.

As far as I have seen, these much-dreaded invaders seem to behave in a decent manner as a rule. Some of them certainly do suffer from slight mental aberration respecting the rights of private property; and one of their prevailing ideas undoubtedly is that the price of a pound of tobacco varies between twenty and thirty sous; but as far as general conduct goes they are quiet and orderly enough. My barber, who has

fifteen of them quartered upon him, and who accepts their presence as one of the *malheurs de la guerre*, assured me this morning that they don't do much damage, but at the same time mildly lamented their occupation of his bedchamber, he having thereby been forced to take up his sleeping quarters under his counter. One class of the inhabitants have certainly profited by their presence to a considerable extent, and these are the restaurateurs. The Prussian officer feeds well, drinks deep, and pays on the nail in bright silver thalers, yellow Fredericks, or crisp pink bank-paper. The *traiteurs* have accordingly been reaping a superb harvest; but the proverb that one can have too much of a good thing will, I fear, hold good in this case also; for, owing to this influx of customers, there is now hardly anything eatable to be obtained at their establishments. Indeed, if a famine is not to be feared, there is at any rate a dearth of various articles of daily consumption. Coffee is no longer to be obtained at many of the *cafés*, and sugar threatens to become a thing of the past. The shop shutters are all closed, but the inhabitants have mostly emerged from their seclusion, and go as quietly about their daily affairs as if the *hordes barbares*, which their journals have been denouncing for months past, were still miles away. The said hordes I have before mentioned have considerably diminished in number since yesterday; but it is impossible to learn in what direction they have advanced, and whether the firing we have heard to-day implies that they have come up with Chanzy's main body, or with a detached corps. The Prussians are as close as oysters, and where a French officer would in reply to a question either amiably prevaricate, or invent some convenient fiction to justify his unwillingness to reply to your question, they merely relapse into a state of silent dignity, which strikes the bold inquirer dumb with awe. The combination of beard and spectacles with which most of their faces are adorned lends them a most doctorial air, and irresistibly recalls to one's mind the days when one was under the rule of the pedagogue.

As to the men, it is impossible not to add one's unit to the universal testimony as to their excellence. The infantry, careless enough in their ordinary appearance, but smart and serviceable when in marching order, and the stalwart cavalry, upon their clean-limbed powerful horses, offer a most striking contrast to the wretchedly clad and vilely shod Mobiles, and the untidy, careless-looking horsemen, and their drooping-headed Rosinantes, of the French army. With all my sympathies upon the latter side, this fact is one which I cannot but admit.

Rennes, Jan. 21.—I have not yet been able to leave for Laval, but I think there is no desperate hurry, for it appears the enemy will not interfere with De Chanzy; and it will be some days certainly before he can do anything. He has to re-form an army. He needs horses most terribly. He also wants arms. Half, or at least a third, of the horses of his cavalry have either died of fatigue and privations and cold, or been killed. All the regular troops that had come here in a disbanded state are being sent back to him, but the Mobiles and Mobilisés are being sent away, I believe to their respective departments—but at any rate into Lower Brittany. The Pontifical Zouaves are here; they have suffered most terribly, and are getting up their force. Great numbers of young men are volunteering for that corps. They say 300 have volunteered since they arrived here on Tuesday last. They drill every day, although they are the only really well-drilled troops in the whole army. At one of the first encounters before Le Mans their almoner, or chaplain, was taken prisoner, and a young priest from Le Mans, who had a brother a Zouave in the corps, requested the honour of the vacant post, and of ministering to the dying and wounded during the action. He was killed in the last battle while fulfilling his ministry.

The *Courrier de Rennes*, a weekly paper, tells us to-day we should not forget, in these times of humiliation, of mourning, and of expiation, that it is just seventy-seven years ago, on this very day, the 21st of January, that one of the most virtuous and wise kings who have ever honoured the throne of France—a worthy son of St. Louis—perished on the scaffold, the victim of those men whose tyranny covered their country with blood and ruins before they themselves bent down servilely under the yoke of Napoleon the First. It goes on to ask why, after such a lesson, Frenchmen have, for the last half-century, been carried away by every revolutionary wind that has blown, &c. The reason it gives is, that France had ignored its Christian mission. Seduced by false men of learning, by immoral and infidel literary men, like Rousseau and Voltaire, she has ever since been trying to build up a social edifice, the basis of which was not respect for God and the Decalogue. The word of the Gospel had come to pass; the house which God had not built had crumbled into the sand, notwithstanding all the vain efforts of man.

There is no news whatever to-day, excepting that we hear again that Faidherbe has won a victory, but nevertheless has retreated, leaving St. Quentin in the hands of the enemy. That despatch does not look at all well, and people are not so blind that they do not see through its want of candour.

The *Journal d'Ille-et-Vilaine* gives us a long despatch which was sent by M. Gambetta to M. Jules Favre on the 31st of December, in which he says, that "It is evident to us and to the whole of Europe that our chances of success are increasing every day, whereas they decrease with our enemies. . . . France is quite transformed; the spirit of Paris has been breathed upon her, and has transfigured her; and if Paris were to fall, a cry of vengeance would come from every mouth. But she will not fall. . . . Public spirit is completely for war. . . . France is becoming more and more attached to the Republican system," &c.

The man must either deceive himself outrageously, or he must wish to deceive others. Why, in the railway carriage I came in here the other night, and in which there were about forty people pent up, I heard such conversation as this among soldiers:—"That Gambetta's the cause of all this useless loss of life."—"Yes," says another, "he thinks he will disappear when it becomes too hot for him; but he should not if I were anywhere near him," &c. When somebody proposed a song to while away the time, a voice suggested with a sneer the "Marseillaise," but that suggestion brought on a storm of groans and hisses. Nobody but the immediate creatures of Gambetta are for this present form of Government—*i.e.* M. Gambetta, Dictateur. Nobody will stand that much longer, I am convinced; but I think there are not great multitudes for a Republic of any kind. There is not a Préfecture or a Sous-préfecture—there is not a single place which has not been filled by some unknown journalist, or some talking lawyer, whose only claim is that they have been waiting in anxious idleness and poverty for the day when they might divide the spoil between them. That is the opinion of people in France. Ask any Franc-tireur; he will tell you what the country people think of the war, and of M. Gambetta's Republic. They betray the French to the Prussians whenever they have a chance; and that is the case almost all over the seat of war. Then compare that fact with M. Gambetta's assertions.

The regret with which France had heard of the signal defeat of General Chanzy was soon tempered by good tidings from the Army of the North. On the 18th of January a despatch from General Faiderbe was published, stating that "having learnt that the Prussians at St. Quentin demanded of the inhabitants a sum of 548,000f., he had resolved to put an end to their exactions, and sent a flying column for that purpose under the orders of Colonel Isnard. That officer encountered the enemy at Catelet Bellicourt and pursued him, killing and wound-

ing thirty men. Colonel Isnard subsequently entered St. Quentin on the 16th. The enemy fled in great disorder, abandoning 130 prisoners as well as a considerable store of provisions. The inhabitants of the town received the troops with enthusiasm." In an unofficial despatch from Lille it was said that "the Germans evacuated the town in disorder, leaving French prisoners, baggage, and two guns behind." But three days afterwards Faidherbe fought a disastrous battle with Von Göben at St. Quentin, described in the following letter from the Correspondent with the German commander, dated St. Quentin, January 20:—

Long before this letter is in your hands the great victory of yesterday over the army of General Faidherbe will be known to you. I informed you in my letter of the 18th that, after the battle at Beauvois, the bulk of the Army of the North entered St. Quentin, whilst the rear guard had taken refuge at Cambray. Whether a junction took place during the night, I cannot say; but it is certain that the troops which had been quartered at St. Quentin previous to the battle, together with those who entered that place before yesterday, constituted a considerable force, ready again to encounter the Prussians. General von Göben, on his part, gave strict orders to attack the enemy early in the morning, at or before St. Quentin, and not to desist until the said enemy was beaten. I happened to see a friend, who is the commander of a regiment, holding the *ordre de bataille* in his hand, and admiring it as a masterpiece of strategy. "This is von Göben," said he; "I know him well from 1866, when he was operating against the so-called South Army. The peculiarity of his disposition is the great exactness with which care is taken of all parts; none being neglected; each working for itself for a certain time, and scarcely knowing it is connected with a neighbour until the time comes when all act together as a whole. He cares comparatively little how many men perish on the march so long as the march is completed in the given time. And you will see to-day," my friend added, "the results he obtains. You will particularly notice that everybody will be not only in his right place, but also in due time." For the sake of explanation, I must state that very many officers of this army attribute to Manteuffel's slowness the fact of Faidherbe not having been beaten in a more decided manner on previous occasions. The confidence of the ordinary soldier in von Göben's talent is striking. On the march through snow and mud, from morning till evening, you can often hear these tired fellows say, "Well, von Göben knows that all this is

necessary," and continue as jolly as ever. We had to rise yesterday as early as five o'clock in the morning, when Beauvois was still in a blaze. Being still dark, and having other troops marching before us, we could advance but slowly. When day broke we were before Savy, a small village south of St. Quentin. The left wing of the French army was already engaged with the 16th Division, the latter coming from Ham. The unceasing fire of the French rifles—always pointed out to the Germans by their officers as squandering ammunition—was not to be mistaken. Now the position of the French could pretty distinctly be made out. A better one could not be desired. To fully appreciate it you must picture St. Quentin situated within a hollow, enclosed by hills, which hilly circle is separated by a valley from a second similar circumvallation. Eastward of this natural fortress, about five thousand paces from the second height, between St. Quentin and Savy, is a thick forest of considerable length, separated by a plain of about five hundred paces from a second forest, less extensive than the former, still more westward, towards the road to Péronne, near Vermand. The French army was so posted on the second height as to have its left wing eastward of St. Quentin, the right beyond the second forest, and the bulk behind both forests, the forests being lined with soldiers. Two batteries were, in a masterly fashion, placed behind the height separating the two forests, so as to be entirely concealed, their existence merely being known by the smoke after the discharge. On our side there was the 16th Division on the right; the 3rd Cavalry Division on the left wing; the 15th Division in the centre. The respective batteries were with their divisions, and the artillery corps kept in reserve. Altogether we had 35,000 men. As far as I could learn from French prisoners, the army of General Faidherbe, reinforced at St. Quentin, numbered no less than 65,000. The proportion of the French and Germans was thus nearly two to one.

At Savy orders were given to the infantry to take the forests, and to help them three batteries were mounted near the wind-mill behind Savy, which threw their shells partly into the forests, and partly amidst those troops who were posted on the height connecting them. The French batteries likewise began to roar from behind the hill, and aimed well. I attempted to follow the infantry, but so wide is the range of the Chassepôts, that at a distance of 1,000 yards, where we began to advance, we had already several wounded. The French rifles are, in fact, feared by the Prussians at long distances, whilst the danger decreases in direct ratio as the distance becomes shorter. In other words, at the range of

about 1,500 or 2,000 paces and more, no Prussian would dream of discharging his rifle; and thus he stands, as it were, at the mercy of his enemy, who by frequently firing makes up for the indifference of his aim. Listening, therefore, for a time to the peculiar music of the French bullets and grenades, I turned my horse round, and witnessed one of the finest and most gallant cavalry attacks I have ever seen. Immediately behind Savy several squadrons of French dragoons were drawn up in line against about an equal number of the King's Hussars. The former were extremely nice and clean; their horses well tended; saddles and bridles apparently a few days only in use; their white cloaks as if put on for the occasion. The hussars, on the other hand, as well as their horses, were covered with mud; their uniforms, usually so neat and shiny, were all soiled from the long and toilsome marches of the last few days. I was just instituting the comparison, when the hussars, like lightning, dashed forward against the enemy, and overrode him in a pitiful manner. The first shock dismounted half of the French dragoons; their white cloaks covered the ground, or were trodden into the earth; whilst those who remained on their horses fell under the heavy strokes of the hussars' sharp sabres, or were made prisoners. When brought in I conversed with some of them, and learned that they had entered the army only three weeks before, and that previously to that time they had never been on a horse's back.

It was noon, and our artillery having no means of estimating the effect of their shells on the concealed batteries of the enemy, left off firing. They resumed it only when the French batteries had changed their front towards their right flank, probably pressed very hard by our 3rd Cavalry Division, and continued and compelled the enemy to give up that excellent position. The forests were already in possession of our infantry. Two light and one heavy battery advanced in columns at about three o'clock in the direction of St. Quentin, leaving the first forest to their left. Before that forest they were drawn up in line against the artillery of the enemy, who, being in retreat, had taken position on the first height around St. Quentin. Nearly at the same time four batteries of the artillery corps were summoned to the battle-field, and placed themselves at the right of the former batteries. Thus on the west side of St. Quentin seven batteries came into action, and the terrible grandeur of their roaring, and the whistling of their shells, were indescribable. The Cavalry Division continued to exercise the utmost pressure on the enemy's right, as the 16th Division did on his left, and thus he had no other course but to abandon also the last heights and to fall back

into the town. One of the grandest war-pictures ever witnessed was now displayed. The full light of day had already disappeared; the wide plain on which the fiercest of battles had raged was silent; but on the right and left wing the cries of victorious troops were heard. When the enemy was driven from his last position the whole long line of infantry and cavalry, followed by the artillery, began to march on St. Quentin, drums beating, banners fluttering in the air; and, amidst the shouts of "Hurrah!" advanced until they had reached the height just abandoned by the enemy. The batteries were mounted in a semicircle around the town, which the 15th Division now took by storm, assisted by the 16th Division, which attacked the east of the town. The enemy was no longer able to resist, and made his escape as well as he could. The army being routed, some went to Cambrai, others are said to have gone to Guise. The Cavalry Division, on their advance in the afternoon, made 4,000 prisoners, and at St. Quentin about an equal number were taken. Up to the present time 11,000 prisoners are in our hands, and smaller detachments are being constantly brought in by the patrols. Had the night not prevented the artillery from continuing their work, it would have been impossible for any French soldier to escape. Where General Faidherbe is gone is not yet known; still less what movements he contemplates after the disasters of yesterday.

The Special Correspondent at Douai wrote on the 21st concerning the result of this battle:—

The blow which the silent anxieties of those most interested have for days foreboded has at length fallen on the North, in the decisive defeat at St. Quentin of General Faidherbe's army. His defeat may not have been a rout; but for all practical purposes the result is the same. The strength of the army is, speaking numerically, impaired at least one-third by men who have become prisoners or vanished, their leaders and comrades know not whither. This is independent of killed and wounded. The remainder are being forced on from Cambrai, which was the first point made for, to the fortresses a little farther off, Arras and here, whence considerable numbers are being drafted off to Lille, and probably to St. Omer, for reconstruction. Thus what was a few days ago at least a compact body, flushed with a certain success, is to-day being scattered among the northern towns. At this moment the men are arriving here in large numbers, with a considerable quantity of artillery, it being presumed that if Cambrai is not invested or taken already, it will be in the course of the day.

The fighting commenced by some skirmishes on Wednesday, the 18th instant. On the previous day General Faidherbe had established his quartier-général at St. Quentin, and early the following morning despatched a brigade of the 22nd Corps d'Armée in advance of the main army, which shortly after followed, in a southerly direction towards Mézières on the Oise. General Faidherbe being practically utterly deficient in cavalry, his reconnaissances were too limited to enable him to know for certain the direction occupied by the enemy; consequently a portion of his men came unexpectedly upon their advanced posts near the village of Roupy; and at Vaux the 43rd Regiment of the Line and the 20th Battalion of Chasseurs were suddenly and violently attacked by a Prussian battery. They lost five officers and over a hundred men. Orders were given to a portion of the 23rd Corps d'Armée, which it must be remembered is mainly composed of Mobilisés as opposed to the 22nd Corps d'Armée made up of Line soldiers and Marines, but they arrived too late to be of service. On the 19th the main battle commenced, at nine o'clock in the morning, by an attack from the Prussians, who occupied some heights overlooking the villages of Grugis and Castres, occupied by the 2nd Division of the 23rd Corps d'Armée, and commanded by General Gislin. By ten o'clock the French were obliged to abandon their positions, and a powerful attack was made on their whole lines by the Prussians with an immense artillery force. The struggle continued till two o'clock, at which hour some French officers assert the Prussian lines were giving way before the 22nd Corps d'Armée, though at the same time the 23rd Corps d'Armée had then lost much ground. The two corps had unhappily become separated by the canal Crozat, too broad and deep to be crossed but by bridges, and were consequently unable to be of use to each other. It was, therefore, soon seen that the 23rd Corps d'Armée (composed, as I said before, chiefly of Mobilisés) began to yield visibly, and by three o'clock had retreated, certainly not in good order—in fact, “ran away” would be the more correct definition for those who had not become prisoners. General Faidherbe endeavoured, but ineffectually, to restore confidence by directing some battalions of the 22nd Corps d'Armée to go to their aid; but before this movement could be accomplished the panic was too great. From this time the 22nd Corps d'Armée, under Generals Derojà and Paulze d'Ivoy, sustained the whole of the fight. Even among these troops some Mobiles gave way, but were again rallied and placed in front of the regiment of Zouaves of the North. These latter are as fine a body of young dare-devils as the

French possess. However, by four o'clock General Paulze d'Ivoy, seeing the impossibility of defending further, the retreat was sounded, and under the continual fire of the enemy St. Quentin was again reached, but only *en route* for a farther distance still; for, determined to repossess the town they had evacuated three days before, the Prussians not only fired upon the troops entering, but sent some shells into it. Thus, when night was falling, the weary men—almost dead with several days' marching to and fro, first upon Albert, next tacking westward upon Fins—were trudging several kilomètres in the dreary darkness to Cambrai, knowing they had lost an important day, and that their conquerors were occupying the town they held the night before. Very few wounded have been able to be brought forward, the majority having fallen into the hands of the enemy. Of the killed and wounded on either side, it would be simply misleading to state any number whatever. The "missing" on the French side are so numerous in proportion to the force engaged, that it can only be assumed that either prisoners have been made *en masse*, or that immense numbers have simply run away as fast and as far as their legs will carry them. Incredible as it may appear, large numbers of these poor fellows have been obliged to march and fight with bare feet, their shoes, bad in the first instance, being completely worn out. I see now many limping through the street with nothing but a piece of the under sole strapped on (God knows how), and their feet naked, or only covered with a ragged sock. Can any people expect Frenchmen to fight under such circumstances?

Thus, within ten days, a second French army, upon which high hopes had been built, was disposed of. In a report to the Minister of War, General Faidherbe stated that at this battle he had only 25,000 combatants, his four divisions having been reduced during six weeks' operations to 6,000 or 7,000 men each; and that he had gone forward, certain of meeting an overwhelming force, in order to assist the sortie from Paris, by the sacrifice of his own army. If the Army of the North was indeed reduced to a strength of 25,000 men, France and Paris, which had been led to believe that it had three or four times that number, had been shamefully deceived. In connection with this battle, one fact recorded by the Special Correspondent before Paris with the Saxons deserves notice. Writing on the 21st, he said:—

It seems to me that the whole war hardly affords a more striking example of the military genius of Von Moltke than the opportune railway trip he ordered for the 16th Brigade, form-

ing part of the beleaguering army. Calculation had furnished him with evidence that Von Göben would make his mark at St. Quentin all the deeper if he were strengthened with 4,000 or 5,000 men and a few guns; calculation and good information told him the hour at which this help would be good at need. The brigade quietly went away for the fight just as a lawyer goes down to Reading or Gloucester for the circuit; and, the work done, it comes back to its quarters before Paris just as the lawyer comes back to his cases in the Court of Queen's Bench. This device has simply for the time converted 5,000 men into 10,000 men. Napoleon I. was, perhaps, the greatest utilizer of his soldiery by means of rapid movements of all Von Moltke's predecessors; but, then, Napoleon had not the locomotive and the *militär-Zug*. Dense as the population of France may be, the terrible and continuous drain as prisoners of what are nominally at least fighting men must be sorely felt.

CHAPTER XXI.

By the middle of January all the armies which were to have saved Paris had failed; the resisting power of the people themselves was rapidly wasting away, and it was necessary for the Government of National Defence to form a critical resolution. The newspapers had severely blamed its recent inactivity. General Trochu was especially marked out for animadversion, his "plan" was ridiculed, his sorties were called "platonic," and his removal was called for. To diminish his responsibility and increase the confidence of the public, the Government had summoned a Council of War, under the presidency of the Governor of Paris, and composed of the generals of the three armies of the capital, the admirals commanding the forts, and the generals at the head of the artillery and engineers, and it was announced that measures had been adopted to unite the National Guard, the Mobile Guard, and the army for the most active defence. But the time had passed when the people could be satisfied with words, however plausible; and besides, the Government could no more afford to wait than the people. General Trochu had said that "the Governor would never capitulate." There was nothing left, then, but to make one more sortie, which it was well understood would be the last supreme effort of the defenders of Paris. On the 19th of January the decisive movement was made from Mont Valérien, with 100,000 men. The army was composed of three main columns, each consisting of troops of the Line, Gardes

Mobiles, and Mobilised National Guards, formed in brigades. The column of the left, under the command of General Vinoy, was ordered to carry the redoubt at Montretout and the villas of Bearn, Pozzo di Borgo, Armagand, and Ermenonville; the centre, under General Bellemarre, was to proceed to the east of the Bergerie. The column of the right, commanded by General Ducrot, was to operate against the west of the park of Buzenval. All the communications leading to the peninsula of Gennevilliers, including the railways, were employed for the concentration of these large forces; and as the attack was to take place early in the morning, the right, which had a long distance to move (seven miles), in the middle of the night, on a defective line of railway, and on a road encumbered by a column of artillery which had lost its way, was only able to reach its rallying point after the attack had commenced in the left and centre. By 11 A.M. the redoubt at Montretout and the villas had been taken by Vinoy's troops. General Bellemarre had arrived at the summit of the Bergerie after having occupied the Maison du Curé. But while waiting for the support of the right he had to bring up a portion of his reserve in order to maintain his position. In the meantime General Ducrot's column came into line. His right, established at Rueil, was cannonaded by formidable batteries on the other side of the Seine, which were replied to by the artillery at General Ducrot's disposal and by Mont Valérien. The engagement was carried on briskly at the Gate of Longboyen, where a desperate resistance was encountered from behind walls and loopholed houses which skirt the park. General Ducrot repeatedly led the troops of the Line and the National Guard on to the attack without being able to gain ground. Between three and four o'clock a fresh offensive movement of the Germans between the centre and left of the French position, and carried out with great energy, caused the French to fall back. A little later they moved forward again, and the summit of the plateau was once more recaptured; but night set in, and it was impossible to bring up artillery to take firm possession of the position; and the French troops, fatigued by twelve hours' fighting, and by the marching on the preceding nights, were ordered to retreat. At six o'clock in the evening, M. Jules Favre published the following bulletin from General Trochu:—

“The battle engaged in advance of Mont Valérien has lasted since morning. The engagement extends from Montretout to the left of the ravine of Celle St. Cloud to the right. Three corps of the army, forming more than 100,000 men, and provided with a formidable artillery, are struggling with the enemy. General Vinoy to the left holds Montretout, and is fighting. At Garches, Generals Bellemarre and Ducrot have attacked the

platform of La Bergerie, and have been fighting for some hours at the Château de Buzenval. The troops have shown the most brilliant courage, and the Mobilised National Guards have displayed as much firmness as patriotic ardour. The Governor Commander-in-Chief does not know as yet the definitive result of the day. As soon as the Government shall have received information, it will be communicated to the population of Paris."

This intelligence was received in Paris with the liveliest satisfaction. All day long the streets had been filled with people waiting for the news of victory. At half-past nine the following bulletin was issued, but probably two-thirds of the population only heard of it on the following morning:—

"Our enterprise, which commenced so happily, has not had the issue that we had hoped for. The enemy, whom we surprised this morning by the suddenness of our attack, brought against us towards the latter part of the day immense masses of artillery, with infantry of reserve. About three o'clock our left, strongly attacked, gave way. I thought proper, after having ordered every one to remain firm, to go personally to the left, and after a time we resumed the offensive; but night coming on, and the fire of the enemy continuing with great violence, our columns were obliged to retire from the heights which they had escalated in the morning. The best feeling has not ceased to animate the National Guards and the troops, who showed great courage and energy in the long and terrible struggle. I do not as yet know our loss. From the prisoners I learn that that of the enemy was very considerable. (Signed) TROCHU."

The Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote, on the 20th, from Versailles:—

The sortie from Mont Valérien yesterday was an effort difficult to explain, save by reasons other than strategic. General Trochu could have hoped to do but little against the strong German force in this quarter without bringing up all his strength and pushing madly on. Now he did neither one thing nor the other, and we can only suppose that he was urged in Paris to fight a battle towards Versailles, and fought one accordingly, to encourage the people to hold out bravely against hunger. The French made a great demonstration and little more, though they incurred considerable loss in so doing, especially on the left of their line.

The best view that could be had of Thursday's fighting was from a fieldwork on the German right, whence Montretout was distinctly to be seen. There were the 4-pounder guns, so light but so deadly in effect, unlimbered and pointed at the French. There were the artillery horses standing patiently in the mud

behind the battery, indifferent to sudden noise, and biting at the withered leaves on the bushes instead of listening to the shells which flew overhead. The gunners were at their post, ready to fire at a moment's notice, and a group of staff officers had gathered in the most convenient spot for looking from the fieldwork towards Montretout. So long as the guns on this side kept quiet it was likely that the enemy's cannon would send only stray shells here and there against the hill-top. But Chassepôt bullets were more plentiful, and without drawing anybody's fire in particular, the battery of which I speak might get more than enough of these small whistling visitors. Even whilst we strained our eyes to catch a glimpse of the French and German troops a little farther forward, and marked how the thin film of bluish smoke and the crackling line of infantry advanced or receded, an artilleryman in the battery fell wounded by a Chassepôt bullet, close to where the staff officers had gathered. Those French rifles have a long range, and it is well to beware of them. See the gallant old colonel of artillery who steps up to the Crown Prince to report what has happened. The report is meant, I doubt not, to suggest a change of position. But the fight on yonder sloping ground has intense interest for the commander of the besieging army. His Highness stands fast, and looks eagerly across the intervening fields. There they come—there come the enemy several yards forward, and the thin bluish smoke is in two very distinct lines now, with a steady crackling beneath it which seems never to flag. Well done both sides! They keep it up like men. The lines of smoke have a deadly meaning, for many of the advancing French roll upon the ground, and some Germans also seem to be hurt. Well done both sides! The sharp crackling fire would wring the hearts of those at home if they could hear it. How steadily the Germans hold their own! If they are doing as well all along the front, there need be no anxiety for the result. Yet for a moment they are borne back. The French gain another strip a few yards in width, and come more fully into view. Their supports seem to have descended from the crest of the ridge behind Montretout, and to be following them on to the sloping fields straight before us. It is a fair chance for the Prussian guns. The battery where we stand opens fire with deliberate aim. "Now to the right!" "Now to the left!" "Let them have it a little higher!" We can hear the orders given, and see the neat working of the fatal tubes. Four gunners are busied with each, and the cartridges, which with cannon of this size are a mere trifle to handle, are slipped in at the breech like pills into a pill-box. Bang! bang! How sharply they tingle on the ears!

There go the shells to the sloping fields across the valley, where the French advance. They cause some confusion, and have an evident effect in checking the forward movement. We can perceive that several of the enemy's skirmishers have run back to the main body. As evening approaches, the lines of bluish smoke are less clear than the flashes of the rifles. But it is not dark enough yet to lose sight of the men who fire. The flashes are twinkling along the crest of the ridge and down on the fields below. We can now see gleams of light from French and German cannon to our right front. Some heavy shells fly very near us, and burst with a shattering disagreeable sound. They are not well aimed, though things begin to look as if this active battery where we stand had drawn too much attention to itself. Bang! bang! from the sharp-voiced, toy-like 4-pounders. Every shot they make is of service to the infantry below. The French have ceased to advance; nay more, they have given ground for many yards, and are farther back than they were at first. The flashes grow brighter, and the forms of the men less easy to distinguish. Another and another heavy shell screams up from the French position in rear of the fighting, and seem more clearly than ever destined for these troublesome field-pieces. Messengers have ridden to and fro between the Crown Prince's Staff and the troops engaged. One officer has galloped away to order up a fresh battalion. Another has come with news that the advanced line is keeping its assailants back. Horses have plunged and kicked and fidged round and round in rear of the battery, for they are not all such quiet steeds as those harnessed to the limbers. There has been too much interest in the work going on before us for any one to think of the shells which scream up from below, until they grow so persistent in their visits that they are not to be neglected. A shell bursts just in front of the battery, and throws up the mud high in air. It does no harm, but its arrival causes some remark to be made to the Prince. His Highness is urged to shift his position, at least to one side, now that the field-pieces have drawn the enemy's fire; and, without mounting his horse, which is led round in the rear, he walks leisurely past the left of the battery to a spot where a line of infantry is sheltered behind a wall. For a little while longer the Prince lingers in sight of the nimble gunners, until darkness has so far prevailed that there is scarcely anything to be seen but the bright flash at each discharge. The fight is less hotly maintained below; the French have seemingly lost heart, and there is no further advance on their part. It has been as stirring an hour's work as one can often have the chance to see.

Montretout was retaken late that night with but slight loss to the Germans, and but slight resistance by the French; and it appeared that after their failure to get forward in the struggle on the 19th itself, these last did not care to hold an exposed position in face of the German field-guns. I heard that the French regiments returned into Paris, with their bands playing, early yesterday. The prisoners whom I saw seemed well fed, though I only saw a few close up.

Another Correspondent wrote:—

I got a capital view of the sortie from the Terrace of St. Germain, where I arrived about noon, having received no intimation before leaving Versailles that any fighting was taking place. On the roof of the Pavilion of Henri IV.—the Star and Garter of the environs of Paris, the highest point in the vicinity—is erected a look-out place, fitted with a most powerful telescope. Through this instrument the French were descried, soon after 8 A.M., issuing from Valérien and pouring down the slopes. The alarm was instantly given, and intimation of the impending attack telegraphed to Versailles, where, I dare say, the world at head-quarters was somewhat rudely startled out of slumbers succeeding the festivities of the King's birthday. Without waiting to get their coffee, each man only sticking a piece of bread into his knapsack, two battalions of the Garde-Landwehr, which garrison St. Germain, were hurriedly pushed through the railway tunnel across the still intact, though undermined, railway bridge, across the Vesinet, to Châtou on the Seine, exactly opposite St. Germain. From Châtou, where the Seine used to be crossed by a bridge, interrupted by the island in the bed of the river, the road to the left leads to Nanterre, that to the right to the Rueil.

The engagement, which began about 9 A.M., was apparently at its hottest between twelve and three. Towards 3 P.M. I borrowed a field-glass from some most obliging Landwehr officers, who explained to me the movements of the hostile forces. Right in front of us, with two bends of the Seine, including the dead flat plain of the Vesinet between us and him, stood Mont Valérien, isolated with a broad base, and, Vesuvius-like, now belching out fire from his summit, now from his sides. For half-way up his slopes are strong redoubts, one facing north-west, others facing south-west and south. Just over the left shoulder of Valérien I could clearly make out the broad top of the Arc de Triomphe, and away to the north, across the plain, loomed the towers of St. Denis—destined, as I am informed, to an early bombardment. The horizon on the left was bounded by the heights of Montmorency. To the right, following the

windings of the Seine at our feet, were stretched out the picturesque line of heights which extend from St. Germain to Sèvres, Meudon, and Clamart, broken into transverse ridges by the lateral valleys which debouch into the Seine at Port Marly, Bougival, St. Cloud, and Sèvres. From the German batteries, established all along these heights, a very lively fire was kept up all day, replying to the cannonade from the southern redoubts of Valérien and the French field-batteries, which seemed to maintain a very steady fire, and to be advancing gradually towards the heights of Montretout, above St. Cloud, which they are reported to have finally carried. To create a diversion in the rear of the main French advance, which was directed to the southward, against the 5th and 6th Prussian Corps d'Armée, with some Bavarians between them, orders were sent to the 4th Corps d'Armée to advance from the north. This movement I could observe very distinctly, especially the period when the advancing field-batteries of the 4th Corps were hotly engaged with the redoubt of Valérien facing northwest, which had to be silenced before the 4th Corps could get past to take the main French advance in the rear. What the result of the episode may have been I am unable to state. About 4 p.m. the fire slackened a good deal all along the line, and the weather, which had been clear since mid-day, became rather thick and foggy; but we could still see the flashes and hear the occasional discharges of artillery, which continued long after nightfall. From the terrace I watched the bivouac fires of the two armies, and went to bed in the full anticipation of a renewal of the engagement on the morrow. The affair, however, was decided the same evening by the driving back of the French from the heights of Montretout.

On the 23rd, by which time the real extent of the battle of the 19th had been better ascertained, the Correspondent at the headquarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote:—

We have found that the French loss was heavier than was at first supposed, and there is reason to believe that, desperate as their chance of success must have appeared, the officers who led the sortie were bent upon striking a blow at the German head-quarters. General Trochu is said to have been present himself, and to have risked his life freely to encourage the men. All the means of attack which modern science supplies, and which are possessed by the French in Paris, were called into requisition. The gunboats on the Seine steamed boldly into action, and kept up a galling fire against the German right, which was established in the park of St. Cloud. The railway mitrailleuse batteries came out on the St. Germain line, under

the protection of Mont Valérien, and attacked such of the besieging troops as it seemed likely that they could reach, though I do not think they were able to keep up more than a distant fire upon the Prussian left. Field artillery and great guns in position were freely used to support the sortie, the heavier pieces sending up their shells from the works near Billancourt and Boulogne. It was altogether a well-supported attempt to make such progress in the first rush of the affair as would pave the way for an advance upon Versailles; and at Montretout, where the French really succeeded in gaining ground, there seemed to be a plan of permanently occupying the spot so long debated between besiegers and besieged. Throughout the day the French held Montretout, and they penetrated some little distance on the German side of the work. Even when the gallant Von Strautz, with his Jägers, supported by infantry of the Line, had recaptured the bone of contention on the hill-top, and thrown back the French with loss upon Suresnes, there remained that body of three or four hundred Mobiles, of which I have already told you, concealed in the village of St. Cloud, cut off, as would appear, by the failure of their friends to support them; and these Mobiles were taken by the indefatigable Prussian Jägers long after the whole matter of the sortie was thought to have been laid to rest. I have heard that the French were considered to have fought better than usual for the first part of their attack, as though they had nerved themselves up to strike a decided blow; but in the afternoon of Thursday, when I had a good opportunity of seeing for myself what occurred, the most that could be said was that they stood their ground, and kept up a brisk fire, with but faint symptoms of pressing forward, and with seemingly no hope of being able to make their way into the German lines. The practice of the French field artillery is said to have been magnificent at one or two points, and that of the German field batteries was quite up to its usual mark, as I can vouch from what I saw; but neither on one side nor the other was the small-arm fire so deadly as might have been expected from the persistent way in which it was sustained. The French were most exposed, and lost many more men than their opponents, perhaps four or five times as many; but the great loss to besiegers and besieged alike was caused by artillery fire.

Without any formal armistice, there was a partial cessation of hostilities in the front, towards Mont Valérien, to allow of the picking up of the wounded and the burial of the dead. I was told by an officer who had been present during this truce of grim necessity, that the French seemed anxious to remove

many of the bodies for interment by their friends within the city; and it was therefore supposed that a certain number of Parisian National Guards of the better class had been mixed with the Mobiles and the Line troops for the purpose of the sortie. The French, who came with ambulance waggons to remove the wounded and collect the dead, were shocked at the loss which they found that their army had suffered. They spoke of having counted as many as forty-seven dead officers in the line of the attack, and said that it was no wonder, for the leaders had exposed themselves to get the troops forward. Trochu was among the foremost for several hours, and an aide-de-camp was shot close by him, not twenty paces in rear of the line of skirmishers.

This sortie, the third great effort of the siege, was all-important to Paris, but did not greatly impress the besiegers, whose earliest despatches greatly understated the number of French engaged. The Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Saxony wrote on the 19th:—

No part of the Maas army was engaged to-day, with the exception of the artillery division of the 4th Army Corps, generally quartered in Sannois. The batteries to the northward of Valérien, at Nanterre, Courbevoie, &c., and the big fort itself, became eruptive about lunch time; and it soon transpired that they were firing to cover the advance of French infantry. The columns of these headed for Rueil, and coalescing with troops that had come down from Valérien and round its southern shoulder, struck out for Bougival, their front covered by skirmishers, and the batteries firing furiously over their heads. I believe the attack extended all the way round to the front of the German batteries at St. Cloud, and a contingent was detailed to threaten Châtou. On a splendid position in front of the *carrières* of St. Denis, the artillery of the 4th Army Corps took up its ground, and made brilliant practice in enfilading the French advance on Rueil, as well as in convincing the force that set its face towards Châtou that it was not wanted there, and that a strategical movement in the direction of its own rear was an advisable operation. I heard occasional reports of musketry fire from the direction of Bougival till nigh sundown, but about four o'clock the artillery made the only sound.

It seems clear that the Germans are not filled with deep solicitude as to the last writhings of the captive in their grasp here. Artillery are held to form bonds quite as strong as the infantry grip which so long has held Paris down. In accordance with a policy which I have already ventured to foreshadow, portions

of the besieging army are already being spared to co-operate in more active operations elsewhere. Yesterday the 16th Brigade, consisting of the 66th and 86th Regiments, was despatched by railway from Gonesse to St. Quentin, to strengthen the hands of Von Göben. In addition to this exodus, there was a general movement of the troops yesterday on the northern front. Details would be wearisome, but the general result is what may be termed a bracing up of the inner circle; and the movement has a specific object in view of coming events, which will suggest itself, at all events, to the military reader.

The sortie on the west did not seem in the slightest degree to interrupt the relentless prosecution of the bombardment on the south and south-west. I judge as much by the evidences of firing which were visible from my window in the intervals of the fog and rain. A German journalist who spent the night with me employed one of these intervals in earnestly contemplating Paris through a powerful field-glass, preserving meanwhile a rigid taciturnity. When the prospect once more became obscured, he turned to the fire with the sententious observation, "Dey are getting dare gruel." The phrase smacks of Jemmy Shaw's or Ben Caunt's, at which haunts, I understand, my guest was a frequent visitor during his single short visit to England; but it is very expressive. They are "getting their gruel," these citizens and soldiers in the white city out there to the south; and the man who refused to bear testimony to the enduring constancy and valour with which they are taking the punishment would have claim neither to the title of a truthful reporter, nor to a capacity for some appreciation of a spectacle and an event unique in modern times.

Military writers are busy just now in analyzing the distinctions between an army of the people and a professional army. I saw an incident to-day, trivial in itself, but which to the comprehension of one familiar with the attributes of a professional army, and who has been also for some months studying the workings of a national military system, was not without its significance. In a field I passed a squad of young soldiers who were practising the bayonet exercise. Presently the drill instructor stood his pupils at ease, whereupon, instead of grounding arms and listlessly waiting for the next "Attention," the squad fell each man to practising industriously the lessons that had just been imparted. There was one young fellow lunging as if he would skewer the garrison of Paris; another preparing to receive cavalry with a pertinacity that must have struck terror into a brigade of horsemen. Then the men took to criticising each other's performances—not chaffingly, but

quite seriously, and even anxiously—individual expressions of opinion being, so to speak, illustrated with cuts. Now, is there a drill-sergeant in the British army who can conscientiously assert he ever witnessed a similar “stand-at-ease” episode in any squad he has ever drilled? I have seen in my time a good many squads drilled, but the chief occupation of such intervals I have ever noted to be chewing tobacco, surreptitious attempts at horse-play, and anxious glances at the barrack clock. There is a standing direction to cavalry recruits in our service that they shall take opportunities for practising the sword exercise in their leisure hours. Whoever saw a cavalry recruit fulfilling this injunction? In some barrack-rooms there are masks and single-sticks, but their use is confined to a few who have had some knowledge of cudgel play before enlisting. The Germans cannot touch the French as swordsmen, but both could walk round and laugh at us. An English dragoon can cut the sword exercise without depriving his horse of its head, and about one in every three is tolerably dexterous at “heads and posts,” but not one in twenty has any conception of utilizing the sword exercise in actual self-defence. Yet the sword exercise is the mere means to a defensive and offensive end; it is what Euclid is to the practical utilization of the science of geometry.

On the evening of the 19th the King of Prussia telegraphed that the French army still remained outside Paris, and that a renewed attack was expected on the following day. By the middle of the day on the 20th, however, the regiments which had fought on Thursday were marching into Paris. In the evening the newspapers announced that General Trochu had requested an armistice of two days to bury the dead. In the afternoon M. Jules Favre summoned the Mayors to a consultation, and General Trochu also appeared in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for half an hour, and then returned to Valérien. The news of General Chanzy’s defeat became known on the same day. The weather was so wet that there were but few groups of people on the boulevards, but at the clubs General Trochu was universally denounced. Almost every one was in despair. The Government, it was said, was preparing the public mind for a capitulation. The next day it was announced that General Trochu had resigned. Vinoy was to command the troops, and the Governorship of Paris was abolished. The German shells continued to fall, but were heeded much less than the future which was visibly lowering upon the city. Between twelve and one on the morning of the 22nd, a band of armed patriots appeared before the prison of Mazas, and demanded the release

of Flourens and the political prisoners who were shut up there. The director, instead of keeping the gate shut, allowed a deputation to enter. As soon as the gate was opened, not only the deputation, but the patriots rushed in, and bore off Flourens and his friends in triumph. With the Mayor at their head, they then went to the Mairie of the 20th arrondissement, and pillaged it of all the rations and bread and wine which they found stored up there. Thereupon by order of the Government the clubs were closed, and the *Réveil* and the *Combat* suppressed.

On the 20th, the Special Correspondent at Paris wrote:—

Paris is very uneasy and very unhappy to-night. I do not suppose that the distress will last as long as it ought, for there never was so hopeful, cheerful a race as these Frenchmen. It is not necessary that they should have any reason for the hope which animates them, or, at least, any reason beyond that suggested by history. France must win, because France has won before, and because it is essential to her glory that she should win again. It has been said that hope springs eternal in the human breast; but this is an exaggeration for all save Frenchmen. Their hopefulness is a constant wonder to me; and so it happens that a conjuncture of miseries occurring to-day which would drive an Englishman to despair, will depress the Parisians only for a day or two. If I were writing of other than Frenchmen I should be inclined to say to-night that all is now over. Writing of Frenchmen, I find myself unable to say so. All calculation is made nought by the incalculable element of hope. I have seen these Parisians in a very much worse condition than they are in to-night—all their chances seemed to be destroyed, all hope gone for ever. On the morrow they were merry as grigs—they had still a good many chances—and hope was irrepressible.

What do we find to-night? First of all, that which comes home very bitterly to every Frenchman—the want of bread. But no: I will mention this last, and return to the subject anon. Let me give the first place to the total failure of the third great sortie planned by General Trochu. It is a failure which has taken all Paris by surprise, because from the earlier announcements we were led to expect victory; and it presses on one's spirits heavily, because it appears that General Trochu has demanded, with all urgency, a truce of no less than two days for the burial of the dead and the removal of the wounded. Next, the pigeon of yesterday has brought in the news of Chanzy's defeat—a defeat which all the gilding of official circumlocution cannot explain away or turn to advantage. Thirdly, if Bourbaki has been so far successful,

it appears that his progress is wondrous slow, so slow that it is not likely to be of much use to Paris. With this heavy load of disaster on his mind, the Parisian sits down to dinner to-day to eat his little dole of sticky, black, bad bread. When I went into the restaurant to dine to-day—it is the best restaurant in Paris just now—the waiter brought me the usual cover; but he said, “Have you brought your bread with you? We have no bread. Since bread is so strictly rationed, all our friends will have to bring their own bread.” I said, “No, I have no bread; I did not know that I was to bring my portion with me: try and get me some for to-day. I shall know better to-morrow.” He brought me a small piece of unwholesome-looking bread, which I could not eat. I happened to be ill, and took a capricious but mortal hatred to this piece of bread. In token of my eternal enmity, I put it on the opposite side of the little square table at which I was dining, and regarded it at a distance. Presently came others to dine at the tables near me. On my left side came to sit a captain in the uniform of the *Eclaireurs de Seine* and a colonel of *Mobiles*; on my right, a young lady dressed in black, and demure as a Quakeress, but evidently of a class for which Paris is famous. In a little while my companions to right and left had eaten up their bread, and began to look wistfully at mine. Says the colonel of *Mobiles* to me—a stranger whom I had never before met—“Monsieur, are you going to eat your bread, or are you going to take it away? If not, may I have some of it?”—“You may have it all, Colonel; I have had enough.” He took half of it, and shared that half with his friend, the captain; whereupon struck in *Mdlle. Cocotte*, saying, “And may I have the other half? Permit me.” This is a trifling incident—the sharing of a bit of bread, which a sick man was unable to eat, between a couple of soldiers and a lady of *Lorette*; but it is characteristic of the day, and I could not help feeling that those who chewed their slender portion of half-baked bread to-day—a portion so small and so bitter that it may be taken as the symbol of many privations, and must awaken many fears—would, if they were capable of serious thought, be led, as they made the most of their hard fare, to think with all the more gloom of General Trochu’s failure at Buzenval, and of Chanzy’s retreat upon Mayenne.

It is useless to trouble you with many details as to Trochu’s failure of yesterday. There are half a dozen excuses brought forward—as, for instance, the delay of Ducrot’s advance by reason of a mistake in the fog. War, it has been said of old, is a succession of mistakes; and he is the greatest

general who makes fewest mistakes. It would have been a very good thing for Paris if her army had been able to seize the line of heights extending from Garches to Buzenval and La Jonchère. If the army of Paris could retain these heights, the siege would soon be at an end. The attempt of yesterday to seize them was a failure; and I do not know of any good result which came of the battle but this—that it gave the National Guards confidence. They stood in line with the Mobiles and the regular army, and fought side by side with them. As a rule they fought well, and have reason to be satisfied with themselves. It is true that some of them gave way, but this was to be expected; and, as a whole, their attitude has given just pride to themselves, has given confidence to their commanders, and has had a very good effect on the Line and the Mobiles, who have not been over-pleased that they had to expose their lives in the front rank of battle while the National Guards stood idly looking on, under the name of reserves, but really useless. There are a set of English here who never speak of the National Guards but as grocers, and who say, "What can you expect of grocers? They can't fight; they must be licked." But the National Guards belong to every class of society—to the highest, to the lowest, and to the middle. There are many of the shop-keeping class in it—very many; but you will also find in it crowds of the highest born families in the Faubourg St. Germain; crowds of students, and literary men and artists; crowds also of the working classes, who, whatever be their faults, have none of those qualities which in France are supposed to attach to an interest in grocery. I discovered by chance yesterday how deeply the National Guards were engaged in the battle of Buzenval.

I went out early to see what was to be seen, but I was suffering from a severe attack of influenza. The day was damp and cold; there was a fog which made it difficult to see anything; and, after finding that the French had made good way, and that there was a lull in the battle, I returned to town. I suppose I was about the first to return from the field. As I entered by the Porte Maillot there was a most wonderful sight,—a dense crowd—perhaps 2,000—men, women, and children, waiting with dread anxiety for the news. They could see nothing, standing as they did for the most part behind the drawbridge, but they listened to every shot that was fired, and looked hard for any one coming from the field. I was almost torn to pieces. They set upon me with terrible eagerness. "What news? How goes the battle? Do you know anything of the 122nd of the National

Guards? How many guns did they find at Montretout?"

Of course I could tell them very little. I had only seen little bits of the battle. But one thing I could tell them—and perhaps it was thoughtless of me to have let it out—that, whereas so far the troops had been successful, Paris must be prepared for many killed and wounded. The number of the wounded was very great. It was the Prussian musketry fire that did most execution. The artillery was comparatively harmless. The Prussian gunners fire with a beautiful regularity, which is, however, little serviceable. If you marked where a shell fell, you were pretty sure to note that every twenty seconds other shells would fall in the same place, or thereabouts, with the mechanical regularity of a steam-hammer. Beware of that particular spot, and you were comparatively safe. It was, I have said, the musketry that did most execution, and its effect was murderous. In the rear of the battle, the sight of the ambulance carriages and the stretcher-bearers leading up to them, was to be compared only to the precincts of the Italian Opera in London on a grand night, when you see long lines of carriages, sometimes three deep, waiting to carry home the gay assemblage. If any of your readers go to the Opera after reading this letter, let them imagine, instead of neat broughams and capacious carriages filled with bright-eyed beauties, long files of stretchers three deep, each containing a wounded man, groaning and bleeding and blanched of feature, and each borne off tenderly by two men, one at the head and the other at the foot. My imagination full of this terrible sight, I told the people as I entered the walls of Paris that there were many wounded. They were greatly agitated; and then came the women round me, anxious to know of their kindred. One had a son in this regiment of the National Guards, another a husband, a third a brother, some one else a father. I shall never forget the trembling of the people waiting to have news of their nearest and dearest—their faltering voices, their swimming eyes, their restless manner. And if ever you wish to picture to yourself the horrors of war, do not let imagination rest alone upon the battle-field. Think also of the thousands of people at the gates of this great city—thousands of all classes, fine ladies and poor women—in agony for those they loved the best; wondering whether they are safe, fearing they are dead, certain they must be wounded. This it is to fight with National Guards. They fight with their families in sight, and the agony of these families waiting at the gates is, in some respects, greater than the agony of the field of battle itself. The crowds, let

me add, were not merely at the gates. All up the Avenue Général Uhrich, formerly known as the Avenue de l'Impératrice, they stood in groups. Half-way up is a solid barricade right across the Avenue. They got on the top of this barricade trying to see something, and all round the foot of the Arc de Triomphe they stood watching with an intensity which it was most painful to witness.

One incident of the battle I must mention as very peculiar. A man was shot on the field for a crime. He was a private in the 119th of the Line. He had, for some reason or other, perhaps not expecting to be discovered, shot his captain in the battle. Summary justice was executed upon him. Half a dozen men were told aside to shoot him. He fell—but not dead, it seems. By-and-by came the “brancardiers,” as they are called—that is, the stretcher-bearers—and see a wounded but living man on the field. They propose to carry him away. The soldiers of the regiment see what they are doing, and warn them off. They find that the man they had shot is still alive. They lift him up to see if he can stand, intending to shoot him again; but he falls flat on the ground with a heavy thud. A soldier levels his gun at him as he lies on the ground, apparently quite conscious. The ball hits, but does not take effect. The man still lives. Then another soldier comes forward and fires. There is something wrong with his gun, and it does not go off. A third soldier then tries, and he at last succeeds. He sends a ball through the head of the poor wretch who had killed his captain. A battle is horrible enough in itself, but an execution like this in the midst of it is worse than all. Perhaps a few more executions would be of use to the discipline of the French army. The Republican authorities are much too mild to the sins of the soldiers.

Jan. 21.—The state of feeling in Paris to-day is very confused. All sorts of schemes are mooted; all sorts of suspicions are in the air; all sorts of rumours are afloat. The schemes I hear are most of them extremely wild, and it would be useless to discuss them. They all, in so far as they are at all definite, involve an impossibility—depriving the Government of their power, and still imposing upon them responsibility. There is a talk of displacing General Trochu in his military capacity, either by General Vinoy or by one of the Admirals. And it is strongly urged that General Le Flô should leave the Ministry of War, giving up his place to Dorian. Nobody knows what will happen. People are very excited. This excitement will wreak its fury on somebody or other. But I do not think they have any intention of surrender. What the incapacity of some of the Ministers may lead them to it is

impossible to conjecture; but all the aim of the people at present is to avoid surrender and hold out to the last. If they have confidence in their leaders, they will dare anything, submit to anything. If they have no such confidence, we shall have a bad time of it in Paris very soon—perhaps to-morrow.

Jan. 22, A.M.—The sky begins to clear. I do not mean to say that the day begins to brighten, and that the prospect is good, but at least we are getting out of doubt and confusion. The announcement appears in the official journal of to-day, to the effect that General Trochu has given up his military command, remaining in power simply as President of the Government, and that General Vinoy has consented to command the armies of Paris, and to try what he can do for the salvation of the capital. Is he likely to succeed any better? It is quite certain that most military critics out of Paris have declared, and will continue to declare, that it was simply impossible for General Trochu to raise the siege of the capital; and from this point of view they may be inclined to speak lightly of his failure. But then the General had no business to declare, as he did, his ability to raise the blockade, and in all his three attempts he made serious blunders which might have been avoided. He has shown wisdom in many respects, and great powers of organization; but he has been slow to act, and he has not had the power to organize the War-office. The stories of the blunders that were committed in bringing together the army on the morning of the 19th are frightful, and the troops could not be brought together without such a disaster as this—that the right wing, Ducrot's army, was not ready to begin its work for four hours after the battle had commenced. There was a great concentration of force; but not an eighth part of the troops which were massed round Mont Valérien were called into action; and though the French artillery did their work well, firing with a precision and with a business-like style which it would be impossible to surpass, there were not enough guns brought to bear, and men were sent on the hopeless task of doing what guns alone could accomplish—that is, to knock down stone walls. Having the greatest respect for General Trochu—a man of a fine simplicity of character and of rare civic virtues—I wish to speak gently of him in his fall. He has done a great work; and it is most probable that the greatest work expected of him—that of raising the siege of Paris—was beyond the strength of any general under the circumstances; but he has committed errors which make it only right that he should now cede the military command to another, who may

be happier in his efforts. That other is General Vinoy, who has always done his work about Paris well. No failures are recorded of him. On the three occasions on which General Trochu made his sorties, General Vinoy always did perfectly his share of the work; no blunders, and no failure—if we except the reconnaissance at Issy the other night, where he was scarcely to blame. Is it to be hoped that the same success will attend the larger operations which he will now be called on to direct? Success is not likely with such a War-office and such a War Minister as we have here; and there is a loud cry for Dorian, the Minister of Public Works, to assume the direction of the War-office. The fact is that M. Dorian has had a good deal to do with the direction of the War-office in a quiet way, and he will shrink from the invidious duty of publicly replacing poor old Le Flô. But public opinion demands the sacrifice, and he will find it difficult to resist the cry.

You will see from these arrangements that the French mean to go on fighting, spite of defeat and bad news. They may not succeed—but, at least, they will fall honourably; and the courage which they display in the midst of so much discouragement; the stern will that, as long as it is possible, refuses to be conquered; the hope which cannot be abashed, are moral qualities worthy of all admiration, and certain hereafter to bear good fruit.

Jan. 22, P.M.—After I had written the foregoing pages, some friends came in upon me to announce that there had been a riot in the night; that more trouble was expected in the course of the day; and that, riot or no riot, it was time for breakfast. I verily believe that the midday meal in Paris is the most sacred of all repasts. Never is anything important done in Paris while the so-called breakfast is going on. You may be guillotined at early dawn, or you may be revolutionized at the hour of absinthe: at the hour of dinner Paris is in the full tide of enjoyment and social excitement; and fortunes and hearts are lost and won at the supper hour. But Paris is always sleepy at midday, and masticates its food lazily, though pleasantly, like cattle ruminating in a meadow. So I made up my mind that I should be in good time for any popular explosion if I arrived at the Hôtel de Ville about one o'clock. A riot at the breakfast hour is incredible.

It had spread like wildfire that the friends of Flourens had got possession of the prison of Mazas in the course of the night, and had released him with all the other political prisoners. What will be the effect of Flourens' release of course one cannot predict—but probably it will not be much. Such an

augury is based on my knowledge of the feebleness of his influence in Paris, and of the anxiety of the people in their trouble to be united, so as to repress sedition. But augur as we may from known facts, it is at the same time impossible to foretell what one or two determined men may not be able to do by sheer impudence, and so it happens that we are sure of nothing. What occurred to-day at the Hôtel de Ville has ended in perfect quietness, but it may occur again, and no one can answer for the result. It requires but a word to produce incalculable mischief—a blow may make a revolution, and one drop of blood may set rivers flowing. When I arrived at the Hôtel de Ville all was very still. There were crowds—the Sunday crowds that come out on a fine day—and they stood in groups talking; but all was peace. I asked if there had been any demonstrations. There had been none. Had any Mayors or their adjuncts from the revolutionary districts arrived at the head of any battalions to demand the Commune? None at all. Indeed, the crowd in the great square in front of the Hôtel de Ville was small enough, and if there had been any demonstration, it must have been a miserable failure. A few companies of the National Guard, however, arrived, but they marched “cross in the air”—that is, holding the butt-end of their musket upwards, and they soon dispersed among the crowd. The ardent revolutionists were of course as much discouraged as dismayed by this inept behaviour. They plunged in among the groups, upbraiding everybody, and declaring that to overthrow the Government it was necessary for all to keep close in battle array. Then followed a clatter of tongues and vehement harangues, in which it was demonstrated that General Vinoy was an ancient Imperialist, and that he would assuredly sell Paris to the Prussians as Bazaine had sold Metz. Nothing would do but the Commune, and the election of some young and obscure colonel to the command of all the French armies. The young colonel must be a “pure” Republican, and all the old Trochu and Imperialist or reactionary set must be swept away. As, however, notwithstanding the violence of these discourses, the people seemed little inclined to come to blows, I left them and advanced to the railings of the middle door of the Hôtel de Ville. Inside, a colonel of the National Guard was addressing the crowd, and begging them to observe order, but especially to beware of playing into the hands of the Prussians by fomenting revolution. Outside the railings a young man, who wore the cap of a civil engineer, was urging just the contrary. He climbed half-way up the railings, spoke with great fervour, and ended his speech with the cry

of "Vive la Commune!" But at the very moment that he climbed the railings, raised this cry, and the crowd rent the air with approving shouts, three windows of the Hôtel de Ville were thrown open, and in the centre window appeared a Garde Mobile, Chassepôt in hand. It was a warning, and the effect was electric. It was remembered that on the last day of October the Mobiles were chiefly instrumental in stamping out the revolution. They were loyal to a man. There might be divisions in the National Guard. In the Garde Mobile there was unshaken loyalty; and if the general in command of Paris lifts but his little finger to them, woe to the revolution! woe to the Commune! woe to all who resist authority! Therefore the sudden appearance of this one Mobile, musket in hand, had quite a dramatic effect. It was enough. The civil engineer leaped down from the railings, and the little crowd which had gathered around him took to its heels with laudable expedition.

After this the most frightful rumours began to circulate. It was said that behind each door of the Hôtel de Ville two mitrailleuses were waiting, ready loaded, to massacre the people. It was said that in the Conciergerie, at the neighbouring Mairie, and in all the public buildings, troops were massed so as to rush out upon the crowd at any moment. A fit of prudence, therefore, took possession of the poor harmless crowd of gesticulating, jabbering, dissatisfied, hungry Parisians; only a Parisian crowd does not keep long in one strain—it is changeable as a weather-vane. And suddenly, as I was admiring, with some sense of amusement, the prudence of the throng, and began to speculate as to what was the real value of such men's lives that they should be so prudent, or what was the worthlessness of life that had in it no stability, I found that the crowd had become quite bold again, all because of the arrival of two companies of the National Guard from the other side of the water. Then a popular orator twisted himself up a lamp-post, and in this hazardous position made a speech, which was enthusiastically applauded. After the speech some persons pushed towards the door of the Hôtel de Ville, while others at the same moment began to retire in a manner so precipitate that, although the movement was directed by the noble sentiment of wisdom, it must be described by the undignified name of skedaddle. And thus for a long time the crowds—for there were several of them—massed in different corners of the great square, continued talking, and now and then rushing up to one corner and then to another, without having, apparently, any definite purpose. Some of the National Guards, however,

seemed very desirous to fire at somebody or something. They fondled their cartridges with impatience, and wore a sinister look which seemed to indicate business. This, perhaps, was the reason why so few persons were on the Place—few as compared with the occasions of previous demonstrations. For my own part, also, I must say that the moment seemed to have come when it was necessary for me to think of what unhappy generals in these days call a strategical movement. I did not see the good of getting a chance shot—all for nothing, and I therefore took up a position, with my back to the Seine, so that I could get behind the Hôtel de Ville if it were attacked in front, and so that, if it were attacked on all sides, I could escape into the bombarded districts of Paris, which would be comparatively safe. The riot was not likely to extend into the bombarded districts, and it would be easier to escape the Prussian shells than the stray shots exchanged between the mob and the Mobiles.

My precaution had its reward. A detachment of National Guards suddenly appeared—it was now about three o'clock—and marched straight up to the railings of the Hôtel de Ville, to the right of the middle door. They were about two hundred strong, with a red flag at their head, and I am told that they came from Montmartre. Having taken up their station in front of the railings, some one climbed upon them—it seemed to me to be the same person who had made the speech from the lamp-post—but I cannot remember exactly this detail. He began talking to the Guards very vehemently, but he had not made much way when in a moment he leaped off the railings with unnatural haste. This movement was instantly followed by the report of a gun. Then followed about ten shots, and then again several volleys. The windows of the Hôtel de Ville were peopled quickly with Mobiles, who fired down on the crowd, while the National Guard fired back again upon the windows of the Hôtel de Ville. What occurred afterwards I did not stop to witness. I had seen enough for the moment, and took advantage of my strategical position to seek refuge in the little streets behind the Hôtel de Ville. The panic was great. Men, women, and children fell and tripped over each other in the most ignominious fashion, so long as one could still hear in the distance the reports of musketry. I cannot give you the details of the casualties to-night. The evening papers are all silent on the subject, with the exception of the *Soir*, which gives a few sentences of general description, so vague that they can scarcely have been written by an eye-witness. I am given to

understand that several women were shot, and the victims must have been numerous if it is considered that the combatants were within a few yards of each other. The revolutionists were, of course, obliged to retire before the firm attitude of the defenders of the Hôtel de Ville, but I am told that the firing continued for full a quarter of an hour, though the Place was speedily evacuated by the rioters. It was from behind trees and kiosks and street-corners that these continued for a time to aim at the windows of the Hôtel de Ville. I am also told that odd shots were fired in the back streets for a long time afterwards.

I did not venture to return to the neighbourhood of the Hôtel de Ville till four o'clock, and I then found that the Place was occupied by the military, chiefly Mobiles and the Line, and that troops were coming up from every direction. On the quays I met a whole regiment coming up all ready for action, with their blankets arranged upon their breasts so as to fulfil the double office of keeping them warm and warding off adventurous bullets. But the revolutionists know that they are powerless against such a concentration of force, and the attempt at riot was quickly suppressed. Very few persons in Paris know to-night there has been a riot with bloodshed to-day at the Hôtel de Ville. At the restaurant at which I dined I heard people ask each other indifferently—"Why did they beat the *rappel* to-day at four o'clock? Was there any trouble?"—"I am sure I don't know; I saw nothing," was the reply. All was quietly done, and soon over; and I do not think the rioters have a chance.

Jan. 23.—According to the official report of the affair of yesterday, it appears that there were five killed and eighteen wounded, as the result of the encounter between the insurgents and the Mobiles. The attempt at insurrection is completely suppressed, and the vast majority of the Parisians will accept with acclamation any measures of repression, however severe, which the Government may deem necessary for the preservation of order. General Vinoy, in fact, agreed to accept the military command of Paris only on condition of stern decrees being passed to prevent any chance of popular disturbance. Accordingly, the clubs have been extinguished in which certain orators nightly spouted sedition; and the *Combat* and the *Réveil*, the two newspapers which—the one in the morning, the other in the evening—daily stirred up the people to rebellion, have been suppressed. Numerous arrests have been made, and the Government may now adopt the once famous words of the ex-Emperor, "For order—I will answer."

The people of Paris have been taken by surprise again in this matter, although they had been forewarned by the orators of the clubs. The greatest blunder committed was the surrender of the Mazas prison by the captain in charge of it. He might have defied the mob outside—the prison is so strong—but he yielded to fear and false reports. It is the way in all revolutions. The insurgents come to the men in authority with the wildest reports as to their power and as to the doings of their fellow-conspirators in other parts of the town. The men in authority are overawed—believe the false reports of the rioters—imagine that these rioters represent some rival authority—and succumb often without a struggle. So a couple of hundred men came up to the Hôtel de Ville on Sunday, and, unsupported, expected that they could take possession of it, and command Paris merely by talking loud and firing a few shots. It is perfectly well ascertained now that it was an insurgent band of National Guards that first fired. They belonged to the 101st Battalion—the same which marched drunk to Issy some weeks ago, got into a chapel, and profaned it with all kinds of buffooneries.

The death-rate this week shows a great increase—4,465, which is 483 more than last week. Strange to say, the diseases arising from derangement of the alimentary system are diminished. The chief increase arises from bronchitis, pneumonia, and typhoid fever.

The French Government had at length come face to face with the food question, which could no longer be put off. Up to this point there might have been optimists and pessimists, but now the question had become practical and urgent. On the 8th of September, when few persons believed that a siege of Paris could last more than six or seven weeks, the *Journal Officiel* contained a declaration, which had been placarded by M. Magnin, the Minister of Commerce, in which it was asserted that “the provisions of food, liquid, and alimentary substances of every kind will be quite sufficient for the alimentation of a population of two millions for two months.” Four months and eight days had since passed, and, in the midst of the severest privations, Paris had resisted as long as she could reasonably hope for aid from the armies outside, while a morsel of bread remained to feed the inhabitants and the defenders. On the 27th of January, eight days after the last battle fought under the walls of Paris, and just as the failures of Chanzy and Faidherbe became known, there were in store 42,000 quintals of corn, barley, rye, rice, and oats, which, reduced to flour, represented, in consequence of the short yield of oats, only 35,000

quintals of flour that could be made into bread. That quantity comprised 11,000 quintals of corn and 6,000 quintals of rice that had been given up by the War Administration, which had not provisions for the troops for more than ten days, if they were to be fed as the troops in the field; that is, 12,000 quintals of rice, corn, and flour, and 20,000 quintals of oats. In ordinary times Paris requires for its subsistence 8,000 quintals of flour daily, 2,000,000 pounds of bread; but after the 18th of January, when the flour was rationed, this consumption was reduced to 5,300 quintals. Thus, placing the figure at 5,300 quintals, the total quantity of provisions on hand represented a supply for seven days. For three weeks there had been no store of flour, the mills only furnishing each day the flour necessary for the day following. A few shells falling on the Cail works would have sufficed at once to endanger the alimentation of the whole city. It was in vain to enter upon new discussions—Paris and its Government were helpless and without resource. In this extremity the Government of National Defence resolved to send M. Jules Favre to Versailles, and obtain for Paris the best terms that were to be had.

On the 24th of January M. Favre applied for an interview with Count Bismarck, supped with the Imperial Chancellor, and returned to Paris. On the 25th he returned from Paris with his private secretary, in time to dine with the Count, and left again at 2 P.M. on the 26th. At 6 A.M. on the following morning carriages were sent to the Bridge of Sèvres to meet M. Favre, General Beaufort d'Hautepoule, and three French officers, who dined with Count Bismarck, and returned to Paris at night. The bombardment of Paris ceased at 1 A.M. on the morning of the 28th, and was not afterwards renewed. Early on the 28th General Vinoy and other officers arrived from Paris, and were closeted all day with Count Bismarck, General Moltke, and M. Favre. At 7 P.M. on that day an armistice for twenty-one days was signed.

Count Bismarck was unable, after his many public denials of the representative character of the Government of National Defence, to negotiate a Treaty of Peace with its members, who themselves were probably not desirous of subscribing the conditions which Germany was in a position to impose. On the other hand, he was unwilling to treat with them for the mere surrender of Paris. He gained all he desired by treating M. Jules Favre and his colleagues as persons capable of controlling the movements of the armed forces of France, and of summoning a National Assembly. Accordingly the Convention which he signed with M. Favre provided for an Armistice of three weeks' duration, and the convocation of a freely-elected As-

sembly, which should authorize either the conditions of peace or the continuance of the war. The Armistice-Convention was in the following terms :—

Between Count von Bismarck, Chancellor of the Germanic Confederation, stipulating in the name of His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, and M. Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the National Defence, both furnished with regular powers, the following arrangements have been determined :—

Article 1.

A general armistice over all the line of military operations in course of execution between the German and the French armies shall begin for Paris on this day, and for the Departments within the term of three days. The duration of the armistice shall be for twenty-one days, dating from to-day ; so that, unless it shall be renewed, the armistice will terminate on the 19th of February, at noon. The belligerent armies will preserve their respective positions, which will be separated by a line of demarcation. This line will commence from Pont Evêque, on the coast of the Department of Calvados, and be continued upon Lignièrès, in the north-east of the Department of the Mayenne, passing between Briouze and Fromental. Touching the Department of the Mayenne at Lignièrès, it will follow the limit which separates that Department from the Departments of the Orne and of the Sarthe, to the north of Morannes, and will be continued in such a way as to leave in German occupation the Departments of the Sarthe, Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher, Loiret, and Yonne, as far as a point at which, to the east of Quarre-les-Tombes, the Departments of the Côte d'Or, the Nièvre, and the Yonne touch each other. Setting out from this point, the tracing of the line will be reserved for an understanding which shall take place as soon as the contracting parties shall be informed as to the actual situation of the military operations which are being executed in the Departments of the Côte d'Or, of the Doubs, and of the Jura. In any case, the line will pass through the territory composed of these three Departments, leaving to German occupation the Departments situated to the north, and to the French army those situated to the south of this territory. The Departments of the North and of the Pas de Calais, the fortresses of Givet and Langres, with the territory which surrounds them to a distance of ten kilomètres, and the peninsula of Havre, as far as a line drawn from Etretat in the direction of St. Romain, will remain outside the limits of the German occupation. The two belligerent armies, and their advanced posts on either side, will

remain at a distance of at least ten kilomètres from the lines drawn to separate their positions. Each of the two armies reserves for itself the right of maintaining its authority in the territory that it occupies, and of employing the means which its commanders may judge necessary to attain that end. The armistice applies equally to the naval forces of the two countries, adopting the meridian of Dunkerque as the line of demarcation, to the west of which the French fleet will remain, and to the east of which, as soon as they can be warned, will withdraw the German ships of war which find themselves in western waters. The captures which are made after the conclusion, and before the notification, of the armistice will be restored, as well as the prisoners who may be taken in the interval indicated. The military operations in the territory of the Departments of Doubs, Jura, and Côte d'Or, as well as the siege of Belfort, shall continue independently of the armistice, until an agreement shall be arrived at regarding the line of demarcation—the tracing of which through the three Departments mentioned has been reserved for an ulterior understanding.

Article 2.

The armistice thus agreed upon has for its object to permit the Government of National Defence to convoke an Assembly, freely elected, which will pronounce upon the question whether the war shall be continued, or on what conditions peace shall be made. The Assembly will meet in the city of Bordeaux. Every facility will be given by the commanders of the German armies for the election, and for the meeting of the Deputies who will compose that Assembly.

Article 3.

There shall be immediately surrendered to the German army by the French military authorities all the forts forming the perimeter of the exterior defence of Paris, as well as their material of war. The communes and houses situated outside that perimeter, or between the forts, may be occupied by the German troops as far as a line to be drawn by military commissioners. The ground between this line and the fortified *enceinte* of the city of Paris will be interdicted to the armed forces of the two sides. The manner of surrendering the forts, and the drawing of the line already mentioned, will form the object of a protocol to be annexed to the present convention.

Article 4.

During the armistice the German army shall not enter the city of Paris.

Article 5.

The *enceinte* shall be disarmed of its guns, the carriages of which will be transported into the forts designated for that purpose by a commission of the German army.

Article 6.

The garrisons (Army of the Line, Mobile Guard, and Marine) of the forts and of Paris shall be prisoners of war, excepting a division of 12,000 men, which the military authorities in Paris will preserve for service inside the city. The troops who are prisoners of war shall lay down their arms, which will be collected in the places designated, and given up according to arrangements made by a commissioner, in the usual manner. These troops shall remain in the interior of the city, of which they will not be allowed to pass the *enceinte* during the armistice. The French authorities bind themselves to take care that every individual belonging to the army and to the Mobile Guard shall remain in the interior of the town. The officers of the captured troops shall be designated in a list to be delivered to the German authorities. At the expiration of the armistice all the combatants belonging to the army confined in Paris will have to constitute themselves prisoners of war to the German army, if before that time peace is not concluded. The officers made prisoners will retain their arms.

Article 7.

The National Guard will retain its arms. It will be charged with the protection of Paris and the maintenance of order. The same will be the case with the gendarmerie and the assimilated troops employed in the municipal service, such as the Republican Guard, the Douaniers, and the Pompiers. The whole of this category shall not exceed 3,500. All the corps of Francs-tireurs shall be dissolved by ordinance of the French Government.

Article 8.

Immediately after the signature of these presents, and before the taking possession of the forts, the Commander-in-Chief of the German armies will give every facility to the commissioners whom the French Government will send, whether into the Departments or abroad, to take steps for the revictualling, and to bring to the city the commodities which are destined for it.

Article 9.

After the surrender of the forts, and after the disarmament of the *enceinte* and of the garrison, stipulated in Articles 5 and

6, the revictualling of Paris will be effected freely by transit upon the railroads and the rivers. The provisions intended for this revictualling shall not be drawn from the districts occupied by the German troops; and the French Government engages itself to obtain provisions outside of the line of demarcation which surrounds the position of the German armies, except in the case of an authorization to the contrary effect given by the commander of the latter.

Article 10.

Every person wishing to quit the city of Paris must be furnished with the regular permits, delivered by the French military authority, and submitted to the *visa* of the German authorities. Permits or *visas* will be granted, in right of their position, to candidates, to the provincial deputations, and to the deputies of the Assembly. The free movement of the persons who have received the authorization indicated will be permitted only between six in the morning and six in the evening.

Article 11.

The city of Paris shall pay a municipal contribution of war amounting to 200,000,000 francs. The payment must be effected before the fifteenth day of the armistice—the mode of payment to be determined by a mixed German and French commission.

Article 12.

During the armistice no public objects of value which may serve as pledges for the recovery of war contributions shall be taken away.

Article 13.

The transportin to Paris of arms, of munitions, or of articles entering into their manufacture, is forbidden during the term of the armistice.

Article 14.

Immediate steps shall be taken for the exchange of all prisoners of war made by the French army since the commencement of the war. For this end the French authorities will hand, as promptly as possible, nominal lists of the German prisoners of war to the German military authorities at Amiens, at Le Mans, at Orleans, and at Vesoul. The liberation of the German prisoners of war will be effected upon the points nearest to the frontier. The German authorities will deliver in exchange, on the same points and in the briefest possible time, to the French military authorities, a like number of French prisoners of war

of corresponding grades. The exchange will extend to civil prisoners, such as captains of ships of the German merchant navy and the civilian French prisoners who have been interned in Germany.

Article 15.

A postal service for letters, not sealed, will be organized between Paris and the Departments, through the medium of the head-quarters at Versailles. In faith of which the undersigned have appended to the present convention their signatures and their seals.

Done at Versailles, the 28th of January, 1871.

(L.S.) BISMARCK.

(L.S.) FAVRE.

By a subsidiary convention it was decided that the *enceinte* of Paris should form a line of demarcation for the French troops, while another, exterior to it, was marked out for the Germans. It was further provided that the surrender of the forts and redoubts should take place on the 29th of January, 1871, commencing at 10 A.M. The arms, field-pieces, flags, and *matériel* were to be handed over to the military German authorities within a fortnight after the signature of the convention, and to be deposited under the direction of the French authorities, at Sévran. An inventory of the armament and *matériel* was to be handed by the French authorities to the German authorities before the 4th of February. The carriages of the guns which armed the ramparts were also to be removed before that date.

The armistice stipulated in this convention was in its leading features favourable to France ; but to this general character there was one exception so striking, that for many days it was impossible to understand how M. Jules Favre could have consented to it. By the first article the army under General Bourbaki was exposed, or rather consigned, to utter and inevitable ruin. It was the only army that was in imminent danger, and the only one for whose safety no provision had been made. But the obscurity which had never ceased to surround the condition and movements of Bourbaki's force, from the day it began its eastward march, proved fatal to it when the French plenipotentiary was called to negotiate with Count Bismarck. On the 28th of January M. Favre knew so little of the real situation of Bourbaki, that he actually bargained for that fatal exemption of that General's army from the armistice, which in a few days caused its destruction.

As we lately saw, after the catastrophe of Orleans, early in December, three corps of the Army of the Loire were collected at Bourges, and placed under General Bourbaki, with the name

of the First Army of the Loire. Its connection with that river, however, proved merely nominal, for it was never employed in co-operation with General Chanzy's Second and true Army of the Loire. Against his own inclinations, and after a statement on his part that his troops were not equipped and supplied for an arduous campaign, General Bourbaki, by the orders of M. Gambetta, led his army eastward. At Bordeaux it was given out that he was going to raise the siege of Belfort and invade Germany. By the 2nd of January he had reached Dijon, from which Werder had suddenly retired five days before. He had with him—after he had effected a junction with the corps sent from Lyons—four corps of three divisions each, and a reserve division, under Cr  mer, of 13,000 men, his whole force thus reaching a strength of 133,000 men, with 300 guns and mitrailleuses. His movements after reaching Dijon were undecided; but as he was advancing towards Belfort, the German general thought it prudent to leave Vesoul and take up a position before that fortress. On his way he met a part of Bourbaki's army at Villersexel, and a struggle ensued for the place. Werder, after a fierce contest, won it, but did not attempt to hold it until he had secured his passage towards Belfort. By the 12th of January Werder had reached his goal, and took up a strong position with his right wing at Frahier, his centre at H  ricourt, and his left at Montb  liard. General Werder had not more than 40,000 troops, of whom 4,000 were cavalry, after he had been joined by General von Schmeling and General Treskow. On the 15th, at 8 A.M., Bourbaki attacked Werder in his positions with artillery, and two hours later the small arms came into play, and the fire of neither ceased until dark. The attack was feebly conducted, although all accounts agree in the statement that the mingled roar of the artillery and the rattle of the musketry was fearful. The Germans were immovable, and bivouacked on the ground they held, the thermometer marking 14   Fahrenheit. Then the defectiveness of the French arrangements became apparent. In Cr  mer's division neither officers nor men had received any provisions from 7 A.M. on the 14th till 6 P.M. on the 15th. Neither had the horses and mules received any forage for twenty-four hours, although in that time they had marched forty miles. Notwithstanding that the enemy was only 800 yards from the main body of this division, the only thought of the soldiers was to fight against the cold, and, sitting on knapsacks, all, from the general to the private, passed the night huddled round the fires. On the 16th the attack was renewed, Bourbaki throwing immense numbers of troops against Werder's right wing in order to break the German line, but that line remained immovable. The loss on both sides was much greater

than on the previous day; the Germans, in a strictly defensive position, had 1,000 killed and wounded, and the French suffered in a much greater proportion. On the third day, the 17th, the French attack was repeated, but faintly; and in the afternoon Bourbaki's columns commenced a retreat of their whole line, followed by the German artillery. On the 18th General Debschütz pursued them as far as Blamont, returning afterwards to before Belfort. On the 19th and 20th they continued their retreat towards Besançon almost without molestation; but on the latter day General Werder began his southward march, and found everywhere traces of an army not only demoralized, but starving. The road as far as Rougemont was strewn with knapsacks, broken Chassepôts, cartouche pouches, caps, cooking utensils, broken swords, and indescribable refuse. Dead horses were found from which flesh had been hacked as they lay. By the 23rd 12,000 prisoners had been taken. The army had lost all organization and discipline, and was in a state of dissolution, when a new enemy descended upon its path. Werder's retreat from Dijon and Bourbaki's advance at the end of the year were events too sudden to permit of the sending of reinforcements direct to the German general from the army of Prince Frederick Charles. But as early as the 2nd of January the 2nd Corps, under General Fransecky, was sent from before Paris, and on the 18th of January was within forty miles of Dijon, expecting to have to strike on Bourbaki's flank or rear as he was engaged with Werder. It was joined by other corps, and came upon Bourbaki's army during its retreat. Its brigades passed in succession before Dijon, where General Garibaldi engaged them with a strictly local success, and deemed that his Army of the Vosges was baffling the designs of the Germans, while the latter were all the time accumulating upon Bourbaki's rear. The capture at Dôle of 230 railway waggons loaded with provisions, forage, and clothing, was an irreparable disaster for the French army, and its commander, one of the bravest of the Imperial generals, an admirable general of division, but apparently lacking the qualifications for chief command, attempted suicide.

Such was the situation of military affairs in the east of France when M. Jules Favre negotiated the armistice. Count Bismarck, anxious that Belfort should be in German hands when terms of peace were discussed, had required that the fortress should be surrendered. As he must have expected, this demand was refused, and he thereupon declared that in that case the siege operations must go on. M. Jules Favre had so little suspicion of the real state of the facts, that he actually stipulated that if Werder were left at liberty to besiege Belfort,

Bourbaki should be free to endeavour to raise the siege. The request was granted, and the consequences of M. Favre's ignorance at once became apparent.

The German generals before Paris lost no time in entering upon possession of the forts they had so hardly won. The King of Prussia, who by that time had assumed the title of Emperor, conferred on him by the princes and people of Germany, visited Fort Valérien on the 29th of January. The Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia, describing the visit and the interior of the works, wrote:—

Mont Valérien, occupied by the Germans, was a standpoint in modern history. The conquerors marched in and hoisted their flag, and wandered over the place at leisure to explore the work. Mont Valérien was empty and desolate when the Germans entered; and the complaints as to food and lodging which the soldiers uttered, on their bivouac in the barracks of their coveted prize, were characteristic incidents of the time. Grim and silent with its great empty barracks, and its huge rifled cannon staring blindly into the mist, Mont Valérien changed masters the very morning after Bismarck and Favre had signed their memorable convention. When I visited the fort in the afternoon, the Germans seemed to be comfortably established. Waggon-loads of food and baggage had toiled up the winding road to the central parade-ground, and sentinels on duty, with the air of old inhabitants, seemed to marvel that any outsiders could have the audacity to visit "their" Valérien. The fortress is very imposing as you sight it from the southward, standing out boldly against the sky, with some resemblance to Edinburgh Castle, though earthy instead of rocky in its standpoint. Valérien, moreover, has the air of being overweighted by the huge square barracks on the top of the mound. One is apt to mistake the size of the place as a whole, and to think it smaller than it really is, until, having left one's carriage at the bottom of the ascent, one has toiled up to the parade-ground before the barracks.

All the world of head-quarters was bent on seeing Valérien yesterday. Princes and generals, doctors and post-office officials, rode or drove from Versailles to the entrance-gate. The rounding ascent from the gate to the barracks was as lively as a fashionable promenade at a watering-place, save for the absence of the gentler sex. As we walked slowly up, we met two French waggons coming down with personal baggage, which had been left behind on the 29th. This was the only appearance of red trousers and képis to suggest by-

gone times. When once the waggoners had passed, there was nothing but German occupation to be seen, and the German language to be heard, throughout the fort. Yet stay! I must record that some one told me of a few Frenchmen stowed away somewhere out of sight, or remaining for a while in the fort on special duty, perhaps to pack up another waggon-load of baggage. The Germans spoke with glee of having found, on the previous morning, a couple of marines in an outhouse, who had remained behind, overcome by drink. "The sleeper awakened" was a parallel to their astonishment, when they discovered themselves among the enemy. They were, however, allowed to slip away, and advised to go to Paris as fast as they could.

The Emperor, in a carriage with four black horses, preceded by a few hussars and followed by dragoons, came swiftly up the approach to the gateway, crossed the drawbridge, rattled under the arch, and, turning slightly to the right, began the steeper ascent. The grand guard presented arms, and stragglers of all sorts along the road came rigidly to attention. Those who were on the parade-ground hurried to the corner where Kaiser Wilhelm would arrive; and those who were examining the great gun not far away clambered on to its ponderous carriage to have a better view. His Majesty seemed to be in excellent health and spirits, and returned the greeting of the troops in his usual hearty manner. A smile well becomes the victor's face. This entry into the French stronghold was a token of conquest won by much patience and perseverance, by cold nights of watching and gallant repulsing of sorties; and the Emperor might be proud of his soldiers. They had not shed their blood to climb to the summit of Valérien; but, by much bloodshed and fighting, they had held the positions which secured its surrender. If there should never be an entry into Paris, the success of the siege will nevertheless be proved by terms of peace most favourable to Germany.

Mont Valérien, with its barracks and outworks, and heavy guns, represents an immense amount of labour. The base of the mound, so to speak, is regularly fortified with a ditch, a counterscarp, and glacis, whilst on the summit are not only barracks, establishments which might have been burnt like those of Issy and Montrouge, but some batteries for long-range guns very formidable to an advancing foe. It was these batteries which made such play in all directions towards the end of November, and kept the neighbourhood awake by their heavy booming noise. The hugest gun of all has a small circular work to itself, and can be pointed against Versailles or St. Germain, or the flat ground beyond the Seine by Bezons,

as may be thought expedient. It is a piece intended to be carried by some powerful ironclad ship, and fires a conical shell some nine inches in diameter. It is a breech-loader, as is its seafaring companion, the next largest cannon in the fort; and the two together form an armament not to be despised, in the modern style of few and heavy pieces, but they were supported in Valérien by a motley gathering of other cannon, great and small—smooth-bores, as the surviving aborigines, and rifled guns of various sizes, which have been added to the armament to increase its strength. You would find piles of round shot, those relics of the past, by hunting about for them, or might choose out a cavalry sabre from the armoury in the fort which should have the ring of the old hard-hitting cuirassier tactics about it. Formidable as Mont Valérien undoubtedly is, the place cannot boast of being completely equipped on the scale of those ponderous rifled guns upon the summit.

Of two of the southern forts the same Correspondent wrote:—

I have had my first glimpse of the interior of much-battered Fort Issy. The fort is not very conspicuous; its strength, in fact, is artfully concealed, and it looks like a mound of snow-covered earth, with some ruined buildings behind it, heaped up for no particular purpose, save that Prussian sentries should stand upon the top. We could see them marching up and down, and could see the German flag on the signal-staff in the north-east corner. Then, as we approached still nearer the gateway, it became clear that there was a deep ditch round the central mound, with scarp and counter-scarp, to break the necks of those who would press rashly on to it. The gateway, protected by an immense traverse on the inside against shells coming from the southward, was filled with Prussian soldiers, who lounged there in as natural a manner as if they had belonged to the place for years. There were artillerymen and infantry of the 82nd Regiment, forming the new garrison; and, besides these regular inhabitants, there were a number of staff officers, who had come to have an inside view of Issy. Once inside, the place is seen to be no mound at all, but a large circle of earthwork, and casemates with cannon mounted on the top, surrounding an open space where the ruined barracks stand. The barracks are utterly destroyed, smashed, burnt, and pounded, roofless and floorless, with great holes knocked through and through them. They stand as melancholy wrecks, and must have almost roasted out the garrison at the time they were destroyed. But their destruction is almost all that the bombard-

ment has effected. None of the casemates have been entered by shells; none of the magazines have been touched; and though several guns have been disabled, the greater part of them could have been fired up to the last moment, had the French chosen to fire. There is a small breach in the curtain of the southern front, just enough to indicate what might have been done with time and perseverance. As a whole, however, the fort is less injured than most people at a distance had supposed. Its guns can never have been silent from absolute inability to fire. Their silence was, I fancy, due to despair about the utility of wasting ammunition against the hill-side, or to scarcity of ammunition wherewith to be wasteful.

What an odd collection of pieces the fort exhibits! There are cannon and mortars; ships' guns and battery guns; new rifled guns of the latest pattern, and old smooth-bores which have been lately rifled. Some of the larger cannon have had their carriages depressed in rear by sinking a hole under them a foot or more deep, and have thus attained an elevation of thirty-five degrees, which accounts for their long range. They were not often successful in hitting the mark, but care had been taken to supply the French gunners with the necessary data for firing with effect. Tables of distances were attached to the guns, having reference to various landmarks. "La Maison Blanche" was so many mètres away; whilst "la route derrière la redoute" was so many more or less, another distance being given for each point named.

There was not much *débris* to be seen in the fort. Either it had been cleared away before the French departed, or there had only been a few gun-carriages smashed, and a few store-wagons damaged, during the fiery ordeal of the last three weeks. It was fortunate for the Germans that they had famine on their side, as battered strongholds in the condition of Fort Issy might have cost them much trouble and loss to capture. Up to the moment of its surrender the fort may be said to have been impregnable by a *coup de main*. But German strategy was too much for its defenders; and there were the familiar spiked helmets to be seen in scores, slung to the piled arms of the soldiers who occupied the casemates. German songs came pleasantly from those dim retreats, and a quantity of meat was being carried across the open space which would have delighted the hearts of the out-going tenants.

Fort Vanves, which I have visited, is not quite so much damaged as Fort Issy, inasmuch as the barracks, though riddled through and through, have escaped being burnt, and there is no commencement of a breach in the curtain on the south front.

Incendiary shells were used against Issy, and not against Vanves, which accounts for the state of the barracks; but, for all that, Vanves was heavily battered, and lost, I believe, more men out of a smaller garrison. The place was rendered very uncomfortable to live in, and that was about all that could be said for the bombardment. No sane commander would have thought of attempting to storm Fort Vanves on the strength of what had been done to it by the German guns.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE newspapers of Paris had done as little as possible to foreshadow the surrender of the city, but every mind had been sufficiently prepared for it by notorious events and universal experience. Nevertheless the dejection of the inhabitants was extreme. The prospect of a revictualment of the city was, however, accepted with a feeling of infinite relief. The first person to enter the city from the camp outside was the Special Correspondent of the *Daily News* at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Saxony, whose appearance, according to the "Besieged Resident," caused as much surprise as that of Friday did to Robinson Crusoe, and who described what he saw and experienced in the following letter, dated Paris, February 1:—

Leaving St. Denis yesterday forenoon, I rode through the Prussian foreposts to the neutral ground without interruptions, and so on to the Porte La Chapelle. Here the gates were closed, but a great crowd had collected in expectation of their presently opening. Everybody on the German side laughed at the Quixotry of my attempt to enter. The crowd was orderly, civil, and very patient too. Many people had loaves and cabbages. After waiting half an hour, an officer appeared on the wall, and exclaimed, "A la Porte de Santois." We all therefore made to the right, I, being mounted, beating the others. This gate was open, but an officer was stationed there to examine passes. I rode on slowly, looking straight between my horse's ears, and somehow nobody stopped me. Once inside, I came in upon sundry mobs of semi-drunken National Guards, and the cry was, "Down with the Prussian!" Matters got serious. The clamour spread, and men tried to clutch at my bridle. I thought it wiser to be bold, and turned on the first man who had shouted, and proclaimed that I was an Englishman, come if possible to do good, not harm, and thus succeeded in diverting attention to my assailant. Then I rode on unmolested through the Rue

Arnaud, where were massed several battalions of the National Guard, apparently to receive their pay; then through the Boulevard Magenta, and so straight on to the American Legation, in the Champs Elysées.

"Paris is utterly cowed—fairly beaten;" so said the first Englishman I met, and his opinion is mine. Yet Paris is orderly and decent, and with a certain solemn-morose self-restraint mastering the tendency to demonstrate. The streets were crowded, almost wholly with men in uniform. Civilians were few and far between. Many shops were open, but many also were closed. There is no want of hardware in Paris. You may buy enough and to spare of anything except edibles. Drink is plentiful enough, but, except near the gate, I saw not a soul drunk. The food shops had nothing to show. There were confitures and preserves, jellies, &c., but solid comestibles were conspicuous by their absence. In one shop I saw several large shapes of stuff that looked like lard. When I asked what it was, I found it was horse fat. The bakers' shops were closed; the grating down before the butchers'. And oh, the number of funerals! One, two, three; I met six altogether in the course of my ride. Sad with an exceeding great sadness; such was what I found as regards Paris long before I reached the American Legation; self respecting, too, in her misery; not blatant; not disposed to collect in jabbering crowds. Each man went his way with chastened face and listless gait.

I spoke with a soldier of the Line. Yes, he had had enough of it. *Sacré!* They had nearly killed him, these terrible Prussians, and he was very hungry. When would the gates open for food? Food began to be with me a personal question. I had nearly filled my wallet with newspapers, and only stowed away, for an exigency, a few slices of ham. Did ever the rarest geological or mineralogical specimen make such a sensation as these slices of ham? When I at length reached my quarters the servant-women asked permission to take the meagre plateful out, and show it as a curiosity to their companions; and after the ham was eaten, stray visitors came in, attracted by the tidings, and begged for a look at the unwonted viands. The whole city is haunted with the chaste odours which horse-flesh gives out in cooking; odours which I learned to appreciate at Metz. They permeate the deserted British Embassy, where, asserting my privileges as a Briton, I stabled my horse; they linger in the corridors of the Grand Hotel, and fight with the taint from wounds in evil case. The Grand Hotel is one huge hospital. Half Paris seems converted into hospitals, if one may judge by the flags. They were more than

were needed until the southern bombardment began; and then, when the hospitals, ambulances, orphanages, and madhouses on the south side had to be evacuated, there was a squeeze on this side of the water.

Very touching is the ignorance as to the outside world. "I have seen three English papers since September," said Dr. Gordon, our Medical Commissioner. "Is Ireland quiet? Is Mr. Gladstone still Prime Minister? Is the Princess Louise married?" Such are samples of the questions I have had to answer. The ignorance as to the condition of the Prussians outside is equally dense. The day after negotiations began, Paris was assured that the investing army had not eaten for three days, and that it was Paris which was granting terms rather than the other way. I am continually asked if the Prussians have not been half starved all through? What they have done for quarters? Whether there are not 400,000 at the very least surrounding Paris? Whether they do not tremble in their boots at the name of the *Francs-tireurs*? Whether they are not half devoured by vermin? Whether the King still resides in Versailles? and so on.

The pinch for food is worse than ever, pending the result of the negotiations for its supply. The day before yesterday the hungry broke into the reserved store of potted provisions in the Halle, smashed all obstacles, and looted the place. From one who has paid the prices himself, and has the figures down in black and white without exaggeration, I have the following list:—2 francs for a small shrivelled cabbage; 1 franc for a leek; 45 francs for a fowl; 45 francs for a rabbit (which may be taken for granted as cat); 25 francs for a pigeon; 22 francs for a 2lb. chub; 14 francs per pound for stickle-back; 2 francs per pound for potatoes; 40 francs per pound for butter; cheese, 25 francs a pound, when procurable. Meat other than horseflesh is absolutely not to be procured. I was assured that if I offered £50 down in bright shining gold for a veritable beefsteak, I should have no claimant for the money! The last cow that changed hands "for an ambulance" fetched £80. Those left cannot now be bought for money. The bread is not bad—the difficulty is to get it. Only people say there is nothing else to do but wait outside the bakers' and the butchers'. I saw huge throngs at both as I rode through Paris, and chiefly women, waiting silently in the cold. What must it have come to when the Parisians are so utterly crushed!

Last evening there looked in a party that had been experimenting in dining. They had eaten ostrich, cat, dog, rat, and mice. This seems to me a hard-hearted mode of extract-

ing a new sensation out of the pinch of the times. Far better to dine on horse, and give the price of dainty viands to put bread into the mouths of the poor suffering women and children. Yesterday neither bread nor meat was distributed in this arrondissement. Those who had no money have simply had to hunger. The sins for which Paris used to be famous all belong to the past. She has been half starved, half beaten into morality, or it may be that other than physical influences have led her to wash and be clean. You see some drunkenness, but far less than I had looked for, among men whose clock, so to speak, has run down. A decent gloom is everywhere apparent. Some assert that the gloom is as much theatrical and assumed as had been the previous valorous seeming. I don't think so. I think you can see the iron eating and burning into the hearts of these men—silent with unwonted silence; moody as they never knew how to be before; and as the downcast faces pass I draw a good augury from them for France and Paris. The great and beautiful feature of the siege has been the absence of crime. No murders, no robberies, but a virtue in which, to me, there is something pathetic. The half-lit streets are empty by half-past nine. The midnight air is not tortured by the sound of revellers, although there are no police to keep order. I woke up between twelve and one in the night, and the silence made me for the moment think myself back at Margency.

The trees on the boulevards have suffered less than I expected. In the Champs Elysées they are utterly ruined, and the others elsewhere have, I am told, shared the same fate. The scarcity of wood was terrible in these latter days. People cannot get their washing done for want of wood to heat the copper. So far as I can learn, the moral effect of the bombardment on the population was terrible. After the first day of defiance the Government felt the pressure. M. Jules Simon told a friend of mine that the bombardment of St. Denis had shortened the siege by a week. Competent authorities estimate that Paris, had she been obstinate, might have gone on for another month, had the pickles and preserves, and all the odds and ends now sold at exorbitant prices, been taken and rationed. But to what purpose? To-day I am to try to get out, which they say is more difficult still; but I put my trust in the aspect of preternatural stolidity with which nature has gifted me. There is nobody else in from the outside as yet.

Lagny, Feb. 2.—As I remarked in my yesterday's letter, had I accepted the well-intended advice of friends, that visit to Paris would never have been made. The two cuirassier

officers who rode with me into the neutral territory, took leave of me quite pathetically, and when I said, "Au revoir," one of them shook his head significantly. It was rather nervous work riding along a road crowded with Frenchmen, not a friendly Prussian uniform within sight, and one's self so dressed as to be easily enough mistaken for one of the hated race. During the long wait we had at the Porte de la Chapelle, while a dense crowd collected with the desire to get inside, I and my horse were the chief topics of observation. Men laid their heads together, and discussed my personality. I was a Prussian, that was taken for granted. Had I countless cattle in reserve? or had I come to have speech with the authorities as to the further humiliation of Paris? I got into conversation in English with a man who had been in America, but this had no effect in leading my critics to suppose I was an Englishman. "These Prussians, *sacré!* they know every language under the sun," sententiously remarked an elderly gentleman with a big cabbage under each arm, and a pair of red stripes down his legs. My horse shared with me the public interest. But it was not the interest usually attracted towards horses. There was no criticism as to her points, her probable action, or her soundness. No, "she was a fine fat animal; she must be succulent; how well she would eat." It is very curious how horseflesh has come to be accepted as an ordinary viand, not to be noted as anything out of the common. The day before I entered Paris, when I looked in on M. Saglier, the good pastor of St. Denis, he hospitably asked me to have some dinner. I assenting, he told his servant to "bring in the meat," and I made an assault, with vigour and perseverance, on a rather ragged roast joint which was placed before me, the pastor looking on benignantly the while. I held my tongue till the edge was off my appetite, and then asked the minister what I was eating. "Well," said he, "of course you are eating horse; and a very choice joint it is. I knew the animal well. He was young and plump, and of a grey colour, which it is well known indicates tenderness." The pastor had been eating horse for the last four months, not because he was forced to do it so long, but because he has a numerous dependency of poor people, to aid whom he has had to practise economy.

When I had got just inside the Porte de Santois, I thought for certain I was to be stopped. The Ceinture Railway was close under the *enceinte*, and as I reached the bridge an officer came forward, with his hand raised. As luck would have it, a train came puffing past at the moment. My mare thought proper to go through a variety of fantastic gymnastic feats at this

apparition, the officer looking on admiringly. When the train had passed, and she had condescended to come down upon all-fours again, the officer smiled and patted her shoulder. I smiled, and raised my hat; and somehow I had slidden over the bridge before he had got the hack-jumping idea out of his head and the interception idea into it. I can't say, even after I had passed successfully the good fellow who assailed me with cries of "Cochon!" that I liked the appearance of the Boulevard Magenta. It was densely crowded with soldiers and some of them might be disagreeably patriotic. But, no; they were all too much busied with their own affairs, getting their pay and discussing events. The closed shops appeared to me to be chiefly eating-houses, all the other shops appeared to be open, although there did not seem to be any trade doing. The bouillon houses, however, at the street-corners, were open, and I learn that their proprietor has had exceptional advantages extended to him.

It surprised me to see so many well-appointed vehicles still in the streets of Paris, with well-conditioned horses. Nor were the omnibuses either few or far between, and their horses were in the best of condition, as were the horses ridden at break-neck speed through the streets by officers who looked, and who probably were, transmogrified *petits crévés*. After visiting the American Legation, where undisguised wonder was expressed at my appearance, I made my way to the Hôtel de St. Honoré, to an old-fashioned and well-known house kept by a worthy Briton of the name of Unthank. Mr. Unthank has had for his boarder throughout the siege Dr. Gordon, our Medical Commissioner in Paris; and he takes pride in asserting, what I believe to be true, that the doctor, under his auspices, has lived better than any other man in Paris. When dinner came it bore out Mr. Unthank's boast. Positively there was a fowl—pretty well, I reckon, the last fowl in Paris. Mr. Unthank was offered eighty francs for the biped while yet it had its feathers on, but refused it, and so we had him for dinner. I believe this house is the only one in Paris into which horse-flesh has not been allowed to enter, and this owing to exceptional circumstances. There are advantages in being a Scotsman. One of these this siege has developed in a curious way. There is some store of oatmeal in Paris. You can make porridge out of oatmeal; and Scotsmen not only eat, but enjoy porridge. Thus Dr. Gordon, a Strathdon man, has supped his luxurious bicker of porridge every morning, while men not born to the manner of porridge gave themselves internal uneasiness by eating the stuff which bears the conventional name of bread. Sharing the origin of Dr. Gordon,

I shared with him his bicker of porridge, and, when I had scraped the dish, came to the conclusion that the man who cannot sup porridge deserves to starve. Yet another national dainty was Unthank equal to—a tumbler of such Scotch whisky-toddy as I had not tasted for months.

I had intended to promenade Paris all night, to make the most of the time necessarily limited. But by ten o'clock the promenade became a solitary one. By nine the dim lights were put out in the kiosks, and were waning in the street-lamps. By half-past the cafés were putting up their shutters, the red-striped waiters looking curiously nondescript. By ten the world of Paris was left to darkness and to me; and so I went to bed. The morning was wet. Would Paris collapse if her streets were not cleaned? There were the scavengers at work in this crisis just as if the Empire was still to the fore, and as if its name was peace; and the shops open in the Rue St. Honoré, and ladies tripping about, and cabs plying, and beggars cadging, and everything as like peace time as could well be imagined, except that everybody was in uniform, that you saw no food for sale, and did see crowds of women waiting outside the bakers' and the butchers'.

I was inside Paris, but how was I to get out? It was clear I was no use there—quite *de trop*, in fact. People who ought to know shook their heads. I must first get my passport *viséd* at the Embassy. Then I must go to the Préfecture of Police and get a permit, which would probably be refused; and then there was, after all, the Prussian lines to pass. I thought it wise to have the passport *viséd*, in case of accidents. Who could *visé* it? Oh, Mr. Blount, the banker, had just been appointed British Consul. To Mr. Blount's I went. A respectable man told me that was the wrong shop; I must go to the Embassy and get my business done there. To the Embassy I went accordingly. A porter, mopping the stairs, was the sole representative visible of Her Britannic Majesty. He sent me into a room, and presently a little man in slippers arrived, who told me he had been summoned from some cleaning operations upstairs, and was in a muddle. Inside his velveteen coat was concentrated the representation of ambassador, attaché, consul, and the British flag generally, including the lion and the unicorn. With much mental perturbation, arising from thick ink and a defective acquaintance with the art of penmanship, he succeeded in achieving my skeleton credentials, and then said I must go to Mr. Blount and get his signature attached. Rather a scrappy way of getting accredited as a free-born British Christian, I considered, especially when I thought of the big house and the bigger item in the

estimates. However, I went to Mr. Blount, who was remarkably civil for a consul, and owned, with ingenuous candour, to an utter ignorance of his new duties. He knew enough, however, to attach his name in the vicinity of the imposing stamp, and then advised me to go to the Préfecture.

I had had enough of gyrating among officialism, and determined to chance it. Trotting down the Rue Rivoli I met Dr. Cormac, who, as head of the English ambulance, supported by Mr. Wallace, has been doing very good work. On my right the gardens of the Tuileries were utterly desecrated, ploughed up with innumerable hoof-prints of cattle, scored with tracks of provision waggons. Wooden barracks have been built where dainty flowerpots once were. The Place du Trône has its eastern end blocked by a gigantic barricade, erected, I suppose, *pour passer le temps*; for it is impossible that it could be of any use for defensive purposes. Once outside this, the Vincennes gate stood before me. I pulled up into a walk, and tried to look as if I were doing the most ordinary thing in the world. There was a cordon of soldiers across the narrow passage just inside the gate. One made a half-motion for me to halt. I began to whistle and looked the other way. He forsook his purpose. In another minute I was in the broad road outside the Vincennes gate, and was in full trot through the suburb. Presently I came to a fort on my right, the only fort still occupied by the French—a concern of barracks, stone walls, and slated roofs, utterly useless as a defence. The trees of the wood of Vincennes have suffered terribly. A little beyond the fort I came to the forepost line of the Würtembergers, and chancing to meet an officer I knew, rode through without so much as being challenged.

Except her forts, her garrison, and her *enceinte*, it is curious to notice how much of an open town Paris has been all through the siege. The forepost defence line of the French is hardly worth talking of as an obstruction. Here and there, it is true, it is formidable. Around the Château of Villetaneuse, for instance, there is a series of works which are of a regular fortress character, and of a construction which is creditable to those who made them; but there they stand all alone, unsupported, as French soldiers as well as French works have been so often during this war. So the German patrols were wont quietly to walk round these Villetaneuse works and do their business on the farther side, utterly negating them. Non-continuity is the striking feature everywhere of the French line of defences. Fort Nogent, close on the right of which I passed in my ride to-day, has not to all appearance

suffered so much as the St. Denis forts; but I had not time to enter it and make a minute inspection.

Respecting the supply of food, the Special Correspondent at the head-quarters of the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote, on the 2nd of February, from Versailles:—

Some anxiety is felt here in regard to the provisioning of Paris.

The capitulation was only just in time, for it is found that there was less food by several days' supply than the French authorities supposed. They had imagined they would leave off with a safe margin of bread at any rate between the people and starvation; but it now appears that even bread may give out before the end of this week. The Emperor thinks the case so serious as to warrant sending in six million rations from the German stores from Lagny, and relaxing the rule about the purchase of provisions at a distance by the French in one of the articles of the Convention. Thus, instead of being debarred from purchase in all the territories occupied by the German troops, the French Government will be able to enter several markets not far removed from the circle of the siege operations. I believe Corbeil will be one of the points to which I allude. There are great flour mills there which will be most useful at this crisis. What with the rations sent in by the Emperor and the modification of the Convention, and the opening of the railway lines to the south, north, and west, we may hope that soon Paris will be out of danger; but the fact that such danger exists, that the Parisians have so nearly eaten their last crust, explains the yielding up of the forts so long before they were made untenable. Stray supplies here and there in the city, barrels of salt meat in one fort, cases of sardines and bags of biscuit in another, could not prevent the city, as a whole, from being starved into surrender. The line of demarcation has been quietly drawn round Paris, and a chain of German sentries watch the Parisians from five hundred yards outside the *enceinte*. The French, on their side, keep guard at the city gates. Nothing like free intercourse is established yet between Paris and the suburbs. It is understood to be rather the wish of Jules Favre than of M. Bismarck that this blockade should be maintained. Jules Favre is probably anxious to keep away outside influence until after the elections on Sunday next; and the German authorities are very careful about granting passes to enter the city, which may seem like an infraction of the French right to keep out strangers during the armistice. Nevertheless, scores of people run the blockade

both ways. The foreign residents who could find a carriage to take them and get permit from the French, have had no great difficulty in passing the German lines; whilst Frenchmen and foreigners have disappeared from sight bound citywards, and by hook or by crook have got through the gates. Those who have just come out say that the sufferings, privations, and discouragement are very great. All the excited feeling of the recent struggle has died away into bitter regret that things could not have been otherwise ordered by the men in power. There is more danger from famine than from the mob, and those who know Paris well think the elections will pass off quietly. The people will have leisure to reflect calmly on the state of affairs, while the French authorities collect their cannon, arms, colours, &c., to hand over to the Germans. There will remain a force of twelve thousand regulars, and between three and four thousand douaniers, Gardes Républicaines, &c., to preserve order in the capital. The soldiers and sailors of the garrison will slide gradually into the condition of prisoners of war, and be ready, should France decide on further resistance, to start for the German fortresses. I find that the Germans still think that whatever happens they are to march through Paris. In the event of the renewal of war they naturally will take possession of the city, and do as they please about marching through; but in the event of peace this wish of theirs will raise a delicate point for negotiators.

Feb. 3.—The strictness of the blockade has been gradually relaxed, and men have walked freely along roads where rifles were pointed at them a few days ago with the sharp command to "halt." A French peasant can now trudge unhindered from Versailles or St. Germain to the villages round Mont Valérien; he can reach the bridge of Neuilly and stare at the crowd of hungry Parisians who are scrambling for Prussian or provincial loaves. The peasant, that most unmilitary and blockaded of men, stopped at every turn and snubbed on every occasion, can now circulate freely round Paris, except in the forts and batteries, with just two lines of armed men to pass to make him as free as in time of peace. He must get through the line of Prussian sentries on one side of the demarcation, and through the guard which is kept by the French on the other side, and then all Paris lies before him. The peasant with butter or vegetables, bread or poultry, will be welcome among the hungry citizens if he can only get through; and if he cannot get through at the bridge of Neuilly, he will, nevertheless, find means to sell his store at an ample profit.

The abandoned villages are waking up to life, and the ruined

villages are visited by hundreds of curious inquirers, who seek to ascertain whether this or that building has been destroyed. Sometimes they search more eagerly and sadly. The house has been their own, and they long to know how much of it remains. Sometimes they are only interested as far as concerns the property of Père Bonhomme, or La Veuve Lebrun. "Ah, ha! voici donc! What will the old man say when he sees it?" I have heard them cry before a heap of blackened ruins which had been identified as some neighbour's house. Or one may notice little groups of women who shed tears over their burnt habitations. The men are more self-contained, but have a sullen, despondent look in many cases, as though they foresaw that they should have to begin the world again. It is due to the French people to record that their tone and bearing through these trying scenes are, on the whole, consistent and dignified. France has "taken her punishment like a glutton," as pugilists say; and if her efforts to win have been abortive, she has at least the merit of having suffered willingly and persistently in what she esteemed a sacred cause. I have not heard a quarter so much lamentation over the war among the principal sufferers themselves as may be read in half a dozen periodicals among their neutral neighbours across the Channel. The French seem to be irrepressibly cheerful and hopeful about their country; insomuch that, unless I greatly misjudge them, they will make her again a first-class Power. After the bitter disappointment of hearing that Paris had capitulated, the people in Versailles took two or three days to rally. Their whole castle in the air had vanished. For a moment they were stunned by the news; but then came their more cheerful mood. They shrugged their shoulders, admitted that it was a bad job about Paris, and began to believe in France again. So with the Parisians who have struggled out through the line of investment, and who may be seen on all the roads leading into the country. Most of them have specimens of the wretched bread which they have lately been eating, and "*à la guerre comme à la guerre*" is the sentiment of the hour. "Monsieur," said one man to us yesterday, "observe this piece of bread, I pray you; it was my ration for a whole day; but that was nothing. If we had only had enough of even such ignoble food, we would have kept the Germans waiting."

I rode along the left bank of the Seine from Sèvres to the Pont de Neuilly yesterday afternoon, and watched the amusing spectacle of the traffic between the opposite shores. The bridge of Sèvres has been partially destroyed, so that at this point every one wishing to cross the river must take boat and

be ferried over. There was a German crowd on one side, in uniforms, staring at the French, and a French crowd on the other side, in plain clothes, staring at the Germans; and the boats passing to and fro between them. We could see that those who got to the French side had quite as much trouble with the authorities there as those who steered towards us had with the German officers on the landing-place; but the impression which I derived from watching what occurred was that the majority of the enterprising souls in the boats made good their story, and scrambled through with more or less pushing about and shouting at. The spectators evidently enjoyed to see a man well bullied, in the way in which those whose feelings have been wrought up to a high pitch of excitement laugh wildly at small jokes when the time of danger has passed. The Germans are of course in high good humour at their success, and the French are relieved to find the struggle at an end. Deeply as many of them mourn their defeat, much as they will all suffer in making good the losses of the war, they have relief from the fearful strain and anxiety of their long defence. I saw hundreds of them on the river side strolling vaguely about to see what could be seen, or fishing with rod and line, in the hope of adding to their scanty store. The left bank of the Seine is strongly guarded by Prussian sentries, who are dotted thickly along the whole distance from Sèvres to the Pont de Neuilly, and blockade-runners are sternly checked in their endeavours to effect a landing on the hither side. I saw one boat, rowed by a couple of women and steered by an old man, come out across the stream to a convenient point near St. Cloud, and land a passenger under the very eyes of two Prussian officers. Up hustled the sentries from right and left. "What do you want? You can't come through; you must go back," were the greetings with which the stranger was received. He bowed, and protested. Two officers intervened, and the stranger proceeded to lay before them documentary evidence that his story, whatever it may have been, was true. I paused a little while to see how the matter would end, and am convinced, from the long delay which followed the first questionings, that the stranger made a good fight of it. He had papers enough with him to have passed half a dozen refugees, and as the boat presently glided back without him, we may assume that he got through.

The hungry people on the bridge at Neuilly afforded a sight not soon to be forgotten. Here were the soldiers keeping guard, and other soldiers off duty staring at the crowd, and there were the citizens clamouring for bread. The Prussian

end of the bridge was held by Landwehr of the Guard, who stood up tall and strong before their foes, a fine specimen of the conquerors for the Parisians to begin by seeing. Carts and waggons, trucks, omnibuses—all kinds of vehicles which could be called into service were assembled at the Prussian end of the bridge to bring passengers or provisions to the boundary line. Some drivers were anxious to cross; others were content to discharge their cargo and return without entering Paris. Bread was the article most in demand. Bread would fetch a good price, and could not be quickly enough supplied. The French crowd was neatly dressed—neatly, at least, for such a crowd in any country; and its avidity for food was out of all proportion to its respectable appearance. Young women with clean white caps and pleasant rosy faces were leaning over the barrier, basket in hand, to beg the Landwehremen to fetch them some bread—"Would Monsieur be so obliging? Les militaires were always so polite. Ah! thank you; two loaves, three if possible; as much as the money will buy." So went the stream of talk, with plenty of rough jokes from the Prussians, with hoarse words of command as over-active citizens were forced back into line, and with shrill cries about nothing in particular from urchins in the crowd. Then a carriage came slowly out, passed the barrier, wound its way through the other carriages that were waiting, and trotted off into the outer world. "Ah!" said the Prussians, "yet more horses in the city! See what meat they had still in reserve." Or, it might be that a carriage went through the other way, cleared the Prussian line after a short discussion, and entered the crowd of Frenchmen which surged to and fro upon the bridge. We could see it pass on up the wide avenue towards the Arc de Triomphe, attracting less and less attention until it was left to make its way unheeded to the Octroi barrier. The crowd would close up again and clamour again for bread. It was a scene which reversed the ordinary course of trade, for here the would-be purchasers, and not the would-be sellers, were shouting aloud. At one moment the Prussians made an attempt to clear the bridge in a friendly way; but the squad of men sent forward for the purpose were so mercilessly "chaffed" and bantered by the people, that they effected little beyond a slight dispersion of the crowd as they moved along. After much that we had heard of the fierceness of the Parisians, and much that the Parisians had doubtless heard of the brutality of the invaders, it was worth while to notice the easy terms of intercourse which had been established at Neuilly between the embittered foes of the last four months. The Parisians were sensibly accepting their defeat, and making the best of it.

The invaders were conducting themselves with the average good nature of soldiers on guard over friends instead of foes. It seemed but a step from the end of the bridge to the Arc de Triomphe, which towered up grandly at the end of the Avenue, and when I went back as far as the monument at Courbevoie, and looked across the Seine towards the city, the busy crowd could be distinctly seen going and coming between the barriers and the bridge. Stray pedestrians were making their way down to Nanterre, with the inevitable satchel and gaiters of besieged Paris, and with the air of having belonged to an ambulance, but taken off the "brassard." Family parties in carts were also upon the road, bound to different villages within range of Mont Valérien, and the wayside vendors of bread and cognac were driving a busy trade with their small stock. The new comers would hold up their black bread contemptuously beside the fine white loaves of the wayside merchants. "Aha! mon brave, voilà ce que c'est à Paris." The black bread was compared with the white, and the new comers would stop to buy a slice and eat it up voraciously. Again, I must notice the unusual effect of seeing well-dressed people hankering for such simple fare. Mont Valérien is hidden from sight by the shoulder of the hill above Rueil, and here the "Mill Battery" came usefully into play, to secure the French position on that side. I could see scores of Germans exploring the battery as I rode down the village street, and had a moment's view of a parade of German troops in the barrack-yard of Rueil. One end of this place had been held by the besieged, the other by the besiegers, so that the houses were somewhat knocked about; but there was less destruction in Rueil than in Bougival, a mile and a half farther on, where many French shells had fallen. Bougival had been cleared of its inhabitants during the latter part of the siege, so that there was a complete re-awakening for the village when once the blockade was removed. I noticed several well-dressed people wandering about from one burnt house to another, and gathered that they knew the owners by name at least; for here, as at Sèvres and St. Cloud, they were speaking of such and such persons, who had lost everything; who had been lucky and only lost part of their goods; or who really had nothing to complain of, for they would be all right again when the rooms were washed and the windows mended. The poorer inhabitants of Bougival were already back in full force, scraping together heaps of rags and rubbish, and clearing the scene, as it appeared, for future repairs. I saw one man who had stuffed an old mattress into a hole in the wall where a shell had entered, thrust his jacket into a broken window to keep out

the draught on that side; and he was actually whistling as he sat in the doorway mending a broken chair. A little way farther there were two women, mother and daughter, who complained that the scrap of furniture left in their abode had been changed during the siege for some one else's chairs and table. "But," said they, "it does not much matter, for when the people come back to whom these things belong, they will perhaps find our furniture in their house, and then we can exchange with them." They were not much depressed by the confusion which prevailed, and smiled at the odd way in which *ces Messieurs les Prussiens* had mixed everything up.

From Paris itself the Special Correspondent wrote, on the 4th of February:—

I was awakened this morning at four o'clock by beat of drum. Again and again the drum went round, disturbing my innocent slumbers. Some provisions had come into Paris—not much, but enough to create a scramble in the market, which was besieged by early buyers from two o'clock in the morning. About three o'clock—that is, of course, long before the markets at this season of the year are open to purchasers—the authorities became anxious; and at four o'clock the drum went round to collect the National Guards, whose business it is to preserve order. Long before day-dawn great crowds were assembled to contend for butter and eggs, carrots and onions, whittings and soles. The sale at daybreak went off briskly but peaceably, and the Parisians were in many quarters to-day able to add a few luxuries to their repast—an egg or a pat of butter.

I went to take breakfast at the *Café Voisin*. The head-waiter came up to me to announce a State secret. It is a secret which he announces to everybody; but he has such a style about him that you fancy for a moment that you are particularly favoured. Also he gives such an air of importance to his communication—his eyes sparkling with pleasure, and enlarging with the grandeur of his information—that you are quite certain that the destinies of the day are in his hands. He is the most invaluable of head-waiters in this way. You go into the *Café Voisin* as a matter of business, meaning to get through a meal which has, perhaps, no great attractions for you, but which nevertheless must be eaten. Perhaps you are preoccupied with important news, political or military. The head-waiter—his eyes tearful with appetite—recalls you to fact, and makes you believe (till you begin to eat it) that the real event of the day is roast ass or stewed cow. He came to me this morning, his face beaming with intelligence of the infinite. Before he could speak he

chuckled, as if he had a miracle on his mind—something not to be believed—which the sceptic before him would laugh to scorn. The infinite, the incredible, the almost unspeakable, which made this supreme waiter hesitate with emotion, was—a fried whiting. As if his feelings were too much for him, and he could not stand the jesting which he anticipated at the mere mention of fresh fish, he pointed with triumph, before he could receive an answer, to the sideboard in the centre of the room. There were ranged three large silver trays. On one were rows of raw whittings ready to be cooked ; on another, rows of smoked herrings ; on the third, a collection of soles and turbot. I asked for the prices. A small sole would be ten francs ; a whiting would be two francs ; a herring would be a franc and a half. The convoys of provisions which have arrived have as yet been very scanty—enough to add a few luxuries to the tables of the rich, but not to touch the necessities of the poor. It is said that in one of the districts of Paris this week the ration for a family of three persons was three herrings for three days ; and that in another district there was nothing to distribute at the butcher's shop but vinegar and oil. The people, however, are full of expectation of good things to come, and I think that many mouths are watering for the good things which are to come from England. Whenever I meet a Frenchman I have to give him an immense amount of small talk as to the nature of "Yorck" hams, and as to the characteristics of cheeses from Stilton, Cheshire, and Gloucester. A Frenchman gets quite excited just now if you talk to him about ham or cheese. If there be any truth in that old doctrine of the transmigration of souls, I fancy the Frenchman will turn mouse, he is so fond of cheese. But how can I answer all his inquiries ? "What is double Gloucester ?" he asks, with pleasing hopes ; "why double ?" He is dreadfully disappointed when I tell him I do not know. My ignorance on the subject is a proof to him of the unreasoning nature of the English mind. These English eat double Gloucester, and they never inquire how and why it is double. "There never was a people so illogical," thinks the Frenchman. "They were all against us in the beginning of the war, and now they are all in our favour, sending us these provisions. Of course they have a reason for it. They want our help in that Black Sea business. But what fools they were not to foresee that they would want our help as against Russia ; and what selfish fools they are to care for us only so long as we can be of immediate use to them. Well, we will thank them for their victuals, which we will eat with a will. No doubt the coming hams and cheeses are good.

But spite of ham, and spite of cheese, the English and French alliance is at an end."

It is not merely the ignorant Frenchman of the streets and boulevards who declares the English and French alliance at an end. Even educated men who lean to English views—such as M. John Lemoine—say the same thing; and it is doubtful if any amount of comestibles sent over from England now will change the opinion. For, in truth, if you will read the article in the *Officiel* of this morning, you will see that the Government seem to regard the provisions coming from England almost as a right—only a fair return for all the hospitality exercised in Paris. The Parisians, it must be observed, have a very lively sense of their own hospitality. They are always talking of Paris as the most hospitable of cities, for no other reason that I know of except that it has the most hotels and the most tempting restaurants. The truth is, that Paris is not more hospitable than London; and neither London nor Paris can show anything like the hospitality which one will find in half-peopled regions, where the inhabitants, be they savage or civilized, are only too glad to get hold of a stranger for company, and to entertain him for days and weeks. If by hospitality is to be understood simply the entertainment of strangers, then it must be admitted that Paris is the most entertaining, therefore the most hospitable, city in the world. But the dictionaries generally give one the idea that hospitality means more than this; that it implies gratuitous entertainment; and most of us who have been in Paris are under the impression that, much as we have been entertained in the famous city, we have had to pay pretty well for our entertainment. It seems, therefore, that the Parisians might welcome the kindly offerings of London as a free gift in token of good-will, and need not be so forward to set them off against the hospitalities of Paris, which are always paid for in ready money upon the spot. The fact is, that Paris is irritable just now, and does not at all like the idea of being in any way indebted to England. There are thousands upon thousands of Frenchmen who imagine that the Anglo-French alliance has been a one-sided benefit for England, and that especially the Treaty of Commerce has been an injury to France and a great gain to perfidious Albion. The result is, that the Government here is strongly urged to abrogate the Treaty of Commerce; and M. Dorian, who has entered upon the duties of Minister of Commerce in the absence of M. Magnin, has even, we are told, proposed to give the proper notices to the English Government by which the Treaty may be annulled at the end of a year. Whatever be the real opinion

of the French Government, I believe it has decided not to adopt the views of M. Dorian.

As soon as the terms of the Armistice Convention became known, the first question asked by politicians was, "How will it be received at Bordeaux?" The answer was not long delayed. Tidings of the capitulation of Paris reached Bordeaux from England before M. Jules Favre's official despatch on the subject could reach the Delegate Government, and provoked M. Gambetta to publish a semi-official note in the provinces, to the effect that it was incredible that the Paris Government should have surrendered the defences of Paris without consultation with Bordeaux. When the official news was received, M. Gambetta published a proclamation, in which, after announcing that "Paris the impregnable, forced and vanquished by famine, had succumbed, but that the city remained intact, as a last homage wrested by the power of moral grandeur from the barbarians," he added, "but, as if our ill-fortune had resolved to crush us, something more sinister and painful than the fall of Paris has come upon us. Unknown to us, without informing us, and without consulting us, an armistice has been signed, of which we have but too late learned the guilty thoughtlessness, which surrenders to the Prussian troops departments occupied by our soldiers, and imposes upon us the obligation to remain inactive for three weeks, in order to convoke a National Assembly in the sad circumstances in which our country finds itself."

This proclamation was followed in a day or two by another semi-official note in the Bordeaux journals, denouncing the partial character of the armistice as the cause of the ruin of General Bourbaki's army, which was by that time accomplished. M. Gambetta, however, accepted the armistice, and with it the obligation to convoke a National Assembly, but intending to make of each a means of prolonging the war. His proclamation, which ended with the summons "To arms! to arms!" was followed by a decree, in which, after declaring it to be "just that all the accomplices of the régime which commenced by the crime of the 2nd of December, to terminate by the capitulation of Sedan, should be struck by the same political downfall as the accursed dynasty, of which they were the guilty instruments," made ineligible for election to the Assembly all persons who, from the 2nd of December, 1851, until the 4th of September, 1870, had accepted the functions of Minister, Senator, Councillor of State, or Prefect, and all who had accepted official candidatures.

M. Jules Favre sent M. Jules Simon to Bordeaux to bring his impetuous colleague to reason, but M. Gambetta was not to be controlled. A decree was therefore issued at Paris expressly

annulling that promulgated at Bordeaux, and restoring freedom of election; whereupon M. Gambetta resigned his functions, dissolving his connection with a Government with which, as he declared, "he had no ideas or hopes in common." The language in which the members of the Government replied to M. Gambetta's reproaches was very dignified. "We do not admit," they said, in their decree, "that arbitrary restrictions can be imposed upon the suffrage. We have fought against the Empire and its practices, and we do not intend to revive them by instituting a system of official candidates by means of elimination. Great mistakes may have been committed, and heavy responsibilities may flow therefrom; nothing can be more true, but the misfortunes of the country efface everything by its extreme need; and, moreover, by lowering ourselves to the condition of mere party actors to proscribe our former antagonists, we should have the shame and the sorrow of wounding those who have fought and bled by our sides. To recall the memories of past dissensions at a time when the enemy treads our bloodstained soil is to retard by their rancours the great task of the deliverance of the country. We regard principles as superior to expedients. We do not wish that the first decree of convocation of the Republican Assembly in 1871 should be an act of mistrust directed against the electors. To them belongs the sovereignty; let them exercise it without weakness, and the country may be saved."

While France was discussing the terms of the armistice and the prospect of an honourable peace, the Army of the East, of which, since its general's attempt upon his own life, General Clinchamp had taken the command, was suffering the last horrors of defeat. Driven like a flock of sheep into a mountainous country, where even well-found and well-disciplined troops would have needed good leading for their safety, hemmed in upon the Swiss frontier without hope of escape, pressed closer and closer by a relentless enemy, the army lost provision-waggons by the hundred, the men walking they hardly knew whither, over icy roads or through the deep snow, day after day. About 15,000 were made prisoners, and 80,000 crossed the Swiss frontier, under a convention signed by General Clinchamp with the Federal authorities. Most of these unfortunate men—surely the most to be pitied of any of the victims of the war—arrived in Switzerland in a state which defies description. Their clothes were rent, and dropping off them; their feet and hands were frostbitten. A Correspondent who saw them reported that "in all the shrunk features and crouching gait told of gnawing hunger, while the deep cough and hoarse voice bore witness to long nights spent on snow and frozen ground. Some had tied bits of wood under their bare feet to protect them from the stones; others wore *sabots*; hundreds had no socks, and,

when they had, they were merely of thin cotton; others, who appeared well shod, would show a soleless or heelless boot—the exposed part of the foot, once frozen, being now a wound crusted with dirt. For weeks none had washed or changed their clothes, or removed their boots. Their hands were blacker than any African's. Some had lost their toes, the limbs of others were so frozen that every movement was agony. The men stated that for three days they had had neither food nor fodder served out to them, and that before that they often got only one loaf between eight men." One corps, the 24th, escaped, and regained Lyons; but, with this exception, such was the melancholy fate of the army led by the brave and brilliant Bourbaki. It was ill-organized, ill-formed, and execrably led; for the officers of the General's staff proved themselves ignorant of the very roads of their own country, and continually compromised the safety of the corps by their mistakes. Yet such as it was, its capabilities, or what were deemed such, caused for the first fortnight of the year much real anxiety at Versailles, and its defeat in the battles of January 15, 16, and 17 was commemorated by the German Emperor by the bestowal of pre-eminent honours and rewards upon General Werder, its commander. On the 18th of January the Emperor sent the Oak-leaf for the Order of Merit, which General Werder had already received. On the 20th he sent 150 Orders of the Iron Cross for distribution among the army, and the following telegram:—

"Versailles, Jan. 20.

"General von Werder,—Your heroic three days' victorious defence of your position, in the rear of a besieged fortress, is one of the greatest feats of arms in all history. I express my Royal thanks, my deepest acknowledgments, and bestow upon you the Grand Cross of the Red Eagle, with the Sword, as a proof of this acknowledgment.—Your grateful King,

"WILLIAM."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE elections, which it was hoped would make France once more a self-governing nation, were accomplished with an ease and facility very remarkable, when the disorganized state of the communications, and the distractions of every kind by which the country was rent, are considered. To facilitate the result, the German telegraph offices throughout France were ordered to receive and despatch the telegrams of the French authorities relative to the electoral operations; and the censorship of the press, which the German authorities had exercised with unsurpassed rigour in the occupied districts, was for the time suspended.

The Emperor Napoleon issued a manifesto from Wilhelmshöhe on the 8th, in which he spoke of himself as one betrayed by fortune, and said that, although he had preserved, so long as the armies of France and Germany confronted one another, that profound silence which is misfortune's mourning, he could no longer be silent in face of the disasters of his country. He then proceeded to "demand from those who had usurped power an account of the blood shed without necessity, the ruin heaped up without reason, the resources of the country squandered without control." The material part of the address, which was exceedingly verbose, appears to have been the passage in which the Emperor said,—“In the presence of the calamities which afflict us there is no room for personal ambition. But so long as the people, regularly assembled in its *comitia*, shall not have manifested its will, it will be my duty to address myself to the nation as its real representative, and to tell it that all that may be done without its direct participation is illegitimate. There is but one Government which has issued from the national sovereignty, and which, rising above the selfishness of parties, has the strength to heal your wounds, to reopen your hearts to hope, and your profaned churches to your prayers, and to bring back industry, concord, and peace to the bosom of the country.” The Emperor would seem to have intended in these words to protest beforehand against the legitimacy of any Government that might issue from the resolutions of a Representative Assembly instead of being established by a *plebiscitum*. His proclamation, however, was unheeded. France returned an Assembly which was Conservative, Orleanist, Legitimist, Republican, or anything but Imperialist. Alsace and Lorraine were allowed to elect representatives, and chose such of their fellow-citizens as had displayed most public spirit during the war. The candidate who was chosen by the largest number of constituencies was M. Thiers, who was elected in no fewer than eighteen departments, a fact of which the Assembly at its meeting apparently took note for its guidance.

The National Assembly met at Bordeaux, for a preliminary sitting, on the 12th of February, and, although not nearly all its members were present, resolved to constitute itself immediately. On the following day the Assembly held its first public sitting, when M. Jules Favre, in the name of his colleagues both at Bordeaux and Paris, resigned their powers as the Government for National Defence into the hands of the Representatives. He said,—“We have borne the burden of government, but we have no other desire, under existing circumstances, than to be able to place our temporary plans in the hands of the National Assembly. Thanks to your patriotism and reunion, we hope

that the country, having been taught by misfortune, will know how to heal her wounds, and to reconstitute the national existence. We no longer hold any power. We depend entirely upon your decision. We confidently expect the constitution of the new and legitimate powers." M. Favre then announced that he and his colleagues would remain at their posts to maintain respect for the laws until the establishment of the new Government.

The Special Correspondent at Bordeaux, describing this sitting, wrote, on the same evening:—

The first public sitting of the French National Assembly was held at two o'clock to-day. About half the Assembly (upwards of 300) were present. The theatre of Bordeaux, one of the most beautiful and best proportioned (though by no means one of the largest) in the world, is admirably suited to the purpose. The members sit in the pit and in the surrounding stalls. The boxes are devoted to the public and the press. The President's chair is on the stage, exactly in the centre of the line of footlights. The tribune—at present an ugly deal pulpit, but which will probably be made more sightly by the addition of some drapery—is in the place of the prompter's box. On either side of the tribune are seats for the shorthand writers; and the secretaries sit on the stage, on the right and left of the chair. A goodly array of ushers, brought from Paris and wearing chains, enhance the dignity of the Assembly. Immediately after, Count Benoît d'Azy, a bland old gentleman verging upon eighty, took the chair by seniority, MM. Jules Favre, Jules Simon, Emmanuel Arago, Eugène Pelletan, Garnier Pagès, Glais-Bizoin, and Magnin entered the House together, walked up the centre of the pit, and took their seats on the second row on the right-hand side, which must for the present be called the Ministerial bench. Garibaldi, who was loudly cheered by the public and the National Guard as he entered the theatre, sat on one of the back benches of the pit. Having heard that the majority intended to oppose his admission, he handed up to the President a short letter, the reading of which by Count Benoît d'Azy formed the commencement of the proceedings, in which he said he had been elected in several French departments on Republican principles, but that under the circumstances he judged it expedient to resign. This announcement was received with a tranquillity which gave but small indication of the row that was shortly to follow.

M. Jules Favre then rose, and in a very few words, delivered from his place, said, that under cruel and unparalleled circumstances, he, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, begged to resign into

the hands of the National Assembly the power which they had exercised since September 4. They would continue courageously to perform their duty till the moment—which they earnestly hoped might not long be delayed—when the Assembly would appoint their successors. He wished to state that he must start that evening for Paris, to conduct delicate negotiations, the object of which he would explain at a future period. Unanimous sympathetic applause followed this short declaration.

When the formality of naming the bureaux had been gone through, and I rather think after the President had declared the sitting at an end, General Garibaldi advanced towards the tribune, and M. Esquiros, deputy for Marseilles, exclaimed in a loud voice, "Garibaldi asked to speak some time ago, hear him!" A tumultuous scene ensued. Vehement cries of "Hear Garibaldi!" were met by others, equally energetic, of "No Garibaldi!" "No Italian!" "Let him hold his tongue!" The public in the tribunes took part with Garibaldi, and several National Guards said, "It is infamous. These men are sold!" One man, with a long black beard, roared out from an upper box, "You rural majority, listen to the voice of the towns!" In the midst of the confusion the President put on his hat, and gave orders to clear the galleries of strangers. There was no occasion to obey the order, as Garibaldi gave up the attempt to speak, and members and strangers all went out together. As Garibaldi left the House and got into his carriage, accompanied by General Bordone and two aides-de-camp, he had quite an ovation. He said a few words only, to the effect that he had come to France to fight for the Republic; that he should have been happy to serve Republican France in any way; but that his mission was now over, and that he should start that night for his home in Caprera. Loud cries of "Vive Garibaldi! Vive la République!" were raised by the National Guard and the public, and the General was escorted to the Hôtel de Nantes by a great following.

I must say, in extenuation of the great disgrace to France that the chivalrous Garibaldi was refused a hearing in a French Assembly, that he did not come forward at the proper time. There was something illogical in resigning at the beginning of the sitting and then asking to speak at the end of it. Even the clerical deputies, who were delighted to show their spite against him, would not, I think, have refused him a hearing had they not relied on the technical objection that the House had risen before he approached the tribune.

The most striking, and at the same time the most unexpected, result of the late elections is the marvellous success of M. Thiers. He is, in my opinion, by far the most able statesman

in France, but he never till now was popular with the masses. And I know nothing so creditable to the instinct of universal suffrage as the fact, that while there has been no sufficient time to prepare for the elections, and telegraphic and postal communications are difficult, an immense proportion of the constituency of France, seeing that hard conditions of peace are necessary, has fixed upon M. Thiers as the man who, better than any other, can negotiate the ultimate terms, and recommend them to be accepted in language so cunningly poised as to be less hurtful to French vanity than that which any other man could command. If France is ruined, she is at least sure to get from M. Thiers *un enterrement de première classe*. Some of the papers conjecture that M. Thiers will be elected for as many as five-and-twenty constituencies. It is quite possible. He stands at this moment member for Bordeaux, Brest, Havre, Poitiers, Ayen, Saint Etienne, Digne, and districts in the departments of the Aude, Dordogne, Charente Inférieure, Hérault, Lot-et-Garonne, and Loire. I now understand why M. Thiers lately told his friends that he was no longer an Orleanist, but a Republican. He aspires to become the President of a French Republic, and he has a very good chance to realize his ambition.

On the 16th the Assembly, by an immense majority, elected its President in the person of M. Grévy, a moderate Republican of long experience in public life. A very large proportion of the deputies were well advanced in years, and they exhibited, in more than one instance, a marked preference for men of an age at which the judgment prevails over the passions. On the 17th the Assembly proceeded to the most important duty which it had to perform prior to the negotiations for peace, and elected M. Thiers Chief of the Executive power. M. Thiers received the same evening the congratulations of the Ministers of England, Austria, and Italy, and was immediately called to enter upon the functions of his office. At the sitting of the Assembly, M. Keller, a deputy, laid on the table a declaration, signed by the deputies of the Lower and Upper Rhine, Meurthe, and Moselle departments, in which lay the territories understood to be required by Germany, praying the Assembly to take it into consideration. The declaration was as follows:—

“The National Assembly, France, and Europe, which are witnesses of the exactions of Prussia, cannot permit the completion of an act which would rend Alsace and Lorraine from France. We are, and will for ever remain, French, in good as well as in ill fortune. We have sealed with our own blood the indissoluble pact which unites us to France, and we affirm once

more, in the depth of all our trials, our immovable loyalty towards the Fatherland. France cannot abandon those who will not be separated from her. The National Assembly, sprung from universal suffrage, could not concede demands tending to destroy the nationality of a whole population. Neither can the People, in its electoral colleges, allow it. As little can Europe confirm these criminal attempts, and let a whole people be treated as a herd of tame beasts. Peace, in consideration of a cession of territory, will never be a durable peace, but merely a momentary truce, soon to be followed by another war. As to ourselves, inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine, we are ready to resume fighting, and therefore we shall beforehand hold as null and void any offers, treaty, votes, or plébiscite which would have for effect to sever Alsace and Lorraine from France. We proclaim our right to remain united to French soil, and we formally engage to defend our honour."

After having read this declaration, M. Keller urged the Assembly to oppose moral to mere brute force, and to proclaim the inviolability of the connection with Alsace and Lorraine. "We hold forth our hand to you," added M. Keller, in conclusion; "do not refuse to hold forth yours." M. Keller's speech was loudly cheered by the whole House.

M. Henri Rochefort demanded that the proposal should at once be referred to the bureaux, so that the majority of the House might give the negotiators imperative orders, or leave them perfect freedom to conduct the negotiations.

M. Thiers then rose, and said that from the bottom of his heart he fully shared M. Keller's feelings, adding that, in presence of the grave circumstances in which they were placed, it was the duty of the House to adopt the only decision becoming its dignity. He said, "It is not to-morrow, but at once, that we must discuss and vote on this proposal. The House cannot await the constitution of a Government, but must itself decide, in the full enjoyment of the privileges, the responsibility it is to assume. It is important that its wishes should be known. As to myself (added M. Thiers), I have devoted my whole life to my country, and I am still prepared to devote all my efforts to France. But it is the duty of the House to settle this question. Let us not wait twenty-four hours, but let us meet immediately in our bureaux and declare our wishes." The President then consulted the House, which decided in favour of M. Thiers's suggestion, and the sitting was suspended. M. Keller's proposals were reported on, and the Assembly, instead of coming to a decisive resolution, adopted one expressing its sympathies with the population of the East, but handing over the declaration of the deputies for Alsace and Lorraine to the negotiators for

peace, to be dealt with as they might find practicable. From the first hour of its meeting it was evident that the Assembly had made up its mind to acknowledge all the importance of accomplished facts.

On the 19th M. Thiers appeared in the Assembly, and read a speech in which he stated that, though saddened by the painful task imposed upon him by the country, he accepted it with obedience, devotion, and love, sentiments of which France stood all the more in need, forasmuch as she was unfortunate—more unfortunate than at any former period of her history. But, he added, she is still great, young, rich, and full of resources, and will always remain a lasting monument of human energy. M. Thiers then announced that in selecting the members of the Ministry he had been guided solely by the public esteem they enjoyed, and their public character and capacities. The following was the list:—M. Dufaure, Minister of Justice; M. Jules Favre, Foreign Affairs; M. Picard, Interior; M. Jules Simon, Public Instruction; M. Lambrecht, Commerce; General Le Flô, War; Admiral Pothuan, Marine; M. de Larcy, Public Works. M. Thiers said that he did not lay down any programme; but under the circumstances there was only one line of policy to follow. It was absolutely necessary to put an end to the evils afflicting the country and to terminate the occupation by the enemy. The country had need of peace, which must be courageously discussed, and only accepted if honourable. M. Thiers also announced the reconstitution of the Councils-General and the municipalities by fresh elections. The Government would devote all its powers to pacify and reorganize the country, to revive credit, and reorganize labour; nothing was more pressing than that task. "I cannot imagine," he said, "that any one can occupy himself with the Constitutional question while France is debating in the grasp of the enemy. Such is our policy. Every man of sense, be he a Monarchist or a Republican, can work usefully for the interest of the country, so that it may at the proper time declare under what form of Government it desires to exist, and then, with the full knowledge of its wants, we can decide our destiny, and that not merely by a majority, but by the national will. Such is the policy to which my colleagues and I devote ourselves. To give your assistance to a policy whose only objects are the interests of the country will be to confer the strongest power upon your negotiators." This speech was loudly cheered.

M. Jules Favre then rose, and said that the Government had deemed it necessary to unite Parliamentary powers with those of the Executive, and proposed, therefore, that, in order to facilitate the negotiations, the Assembly should appoint a Com-

mittee of fifteen deputies to proceed at once to Paris, who would be in constant communication with the negotiators. The latter would be empowered to treat in the name of the country, and the Commission would be informed of the negotiations, and would subsequently report thereupon to the Assembly. The Commission was appointed, and the Assembly, at the suggestion of M. Thiers, resolved to suspend its sittings during the negotiations. MM. Thiers and Jules Favre, with M. Picard, then left for Paris, in order afterwards to negotiate with Count Bismarck at Versailles.

While these transactions were taking place at Bordeaux, Paris was occupied with the interests peculiar to its own unique condition. It was still invested by the enemy—the only city so invested in France. The German guns were pointed towards its *enceinte*; German officers *viséd* the permission to pass in and out; and a German army threatened to make a triumphal march through its streets.

The following letter, from the Correspondent who during the siege was with the Crown Prince of Saxony's army, was written on the 8th of February, and describes a visit to Paris:—

Before I got into St. Denis the weather had changed into an abominable drizzling rain, under the malign influence of which the forts, sulky-looking at the best of times, looked very gloomy indeed. As for St. Denis itself, what between mud ruins, shell-holes, swarms of passing French that cumbered every foot of the road, *marketenders* bawling and swearing in German dashed with French—every German in these parts now engrafts French words on his mother-tongue—the place was one to be got out of as soon as possible. How quickly the Von Schwartzhoffs, Saxon-province men, have settled down in the place, made themselves at home, and established kindly relations with the natives! It is nothing uncommon, as you ride into St. Denis, to meet a group of French with a couple of Prussian soldiers accompanying it, carrying the baskets or bags of the women folk, and making desperate efforts to be conversible as they walk on. I saw more than furious flirtation going on as I rode through yesterday, the French girl giggling with pleasure at the half-understood compliments, eked out with pantomime, which the big man in the helmet was paying her with a clumsy grace. But they don't confine their attentions to the young women, these helmeted family soldiers. I suppose it must be from some tender recollection of a humble old woman away somewhere in the Fatherland that this smart young under-officer is assiduously arming along the crowded street this shambling half-blind old woman in the strange bonnet and the inevitable

green umbrella—the old lady's cracked voice trembling with gratitude as she pours a voluble stream of French into the ears of one who, it is plain, does not comprehend a word of what she utters. But although the German garrison and St. Denis have become friendly—very friendly—still the German rule is so to arrange matters that no dislocation of friendship should take them unawares. So the first barricade in the principal street has had two pretty embrasures neatly scooped out of it, and behind these embrasures stand two trim field-pieces, looking up the street with a gaze very suggestive of a clean sweep if need were. This suggestion is pointed by the shrapnel shells in the boxes which the artillerymen are overhauling, just to see that all is right. I noticed, by the way, a statement in a contemporary that the Prussian artillery had neither shrapnel shells nor time fuses. They have both—the time fuse being fitted to the shrapnel shell, which are of all calibres, from the shells for the field artillery (used with so much effect at Gravelotte) to the big 52-pounder shells which I have seen lying ready for use in the battery at La Barre.

There is no want of food now in St. Denis; where the want lies is as regards the money to buy it wherewithal. A few of the rich inhabitants are trying what they can to stem the torrent of misery, but they are utterly unable to cope with it with any success. You can buy mutton for fifteen sous a pound, and beef for twenty sous; but then if you have got never so much as a single sou, the prices might as well be ten times as much. In their rough hearty way the German soldiers are doing a great deal to help to stave off starvation; but the place is full of misery of the most abject kind. The station of St. Denis is already in full working order, and passengers are forwarded from it, although the class of carriage is not guaranteed. I saw a batch of people start for the La Chapelle terminus on a train of flat open trucks. No tickets are as yet issued on the Northern Railway nearer than Villiers le Bel, but so long as you are allowed to travel, a ticket is not one of the necessities of life.

It was a strange scene on the forepost line. The hour was about half-past five when I reached it. As I understand, the nominal hour for closing intercommunication is six; but on the German side the living barricade, in the shape of a cordon of soldiers, had been put up at five instead of six. In consequence a dense mass of disappointed people had accumulated, complaining bitterly. Behind the folks on foot were long lines of carriages, and the number was being continually added to. It was indeed an important question for many. They lived

in St. Denis; they had no place to go to if they went back to Paris, and besides, by the time they could get back the Paris gates would be closed. Were they to pass the night on the plain? I thought the Prussians were rather stern about the matter. Cavalrymen, with horses that reared imposingly, rode continually across the front in a succession of plunges, driving the people back, as I have seen a troop of dragoons clear Dame Street, in Dublin, on "St. Patrick's day in the morning." On behalf of a gentleman in charge of an International Society's ambulance waggon, I appealed to the officer on duty; but "I have my instructions" was the response, which no one could challenge. I may mention by the way that the members of this ambulance, whose curious relative position to their sick and wounded I explained in a previous letter, have obtained permission to circulate between St. Denis and the plain, and even to go into Paris; the permission being, of course, subject to the ordinary restrictions. As it was granted on my representations to head-quarters, I am none the worse pleased to mention the circumstance. There is a regular and orderly system of examining passes at the point where the road cuts into the glacis of the *enceinte*. There I found an officer who spoke both German and English, and who comically grumbled that his linguistic accomplishments seemed to doom him to permanence in his present position. A trying position truly. Had I not already seen that everybody was trying to get out of Paris, I should have certainly said that everybody was trying to get into it. Very civil was the polyglot officer, and I found myself inside La Chapelle ever so much sooner than I had anticipated. My first visit was to the terminus of the Northern Railway. Paris is right grateful to England for what she has done in the way of provisioning her. The memory of rankling irritation because we did not interfere on behalf of our "ancient ally" is blotted out; all the bitterness that fell to our lot as neutrals has sweetened into a thankful geniality. As I talked German with the French officer at the gate, some of those who stood within earshot remarked, "He is a Prussian." "No, sirs," struck in the officer, "he is an Englishman." Why, as I am a modest man and given to blushing, they actually gave me three cheers—these blouses by the gate. Intellect, feeling, sympathy, what not—all very well in certain circumstances; but when you find a man starving, the way to get at him is *viâ* a full belly.

"Why, they have got over it already!" Such was the remark I made to myself as I rode through Paris in the dusk—a Paris no more like the Paris I had seen a week before than is Niobe to a clown grinning through a horse-collar. Paris has in a

great measure recovered her spirits, and with them her complacency. The general population looks no more as if all was lost. Groups form and converse—they even enliven into gesticulation. The wine-shops get up quite a creditable illumination, and they are the reverse of empty. But they are not so full as are the public soup-kitchens, from which, as I ride past, I reason that the contents of the twenty-seven trains have not quite diffused themselves so widely as to bring plenty into every household, and there still are cries outside the bakers' shops; but there is something better to wait for than in the old days. True the bread is still brown; but it is not like glue, jam, starch, molasses, brown paper, billsticker's paste, and printer's ink blocked together, as it was the other day. There is in it a goodly proportion of wholesome British flour, and it is a toothsome morsel compared to the stuff that I loathed here the other day. There are many more shutters down from the shop-fronts than on the occasion of my first visit. It is true there is not much food about yet, and prices are "famine;" but still the look ahead is towards a harbour of plenty pretty soon, not to misery, cold, hunger, bombshells, and despair. So Paris has got over the terrible twinge which the surrender gave her at first, and has owned to herself that things are looking up. "After all," says Paris, "I do well to get rid of my moping humour, and to abjure my intention of jumping into the Seine and finding my way into the Morgue. It cut me very deeply, no doubt, to have to sign that convention; but only just think what I have braved, done, and suffered. You can't in common decency refuse to own that I am at least something of a heroine; that I have deserved well of my country and of my traditional reputation. Well, *vive la gloire!* I have the glory if I have not the success; so let me smooth my face and pluck up my spirits a bit, and go out for a walk on the boulevards, and once more assert the tongue-gift I am endowed with." Who can blame Paris if she reasons thus, providing only her tongue-gift, her *gloire*, and her shortness of memory do not combine to make her forgetful of the terrible ordeal she has gone through? Keep that memory fresh in the mind of Paris, and you may be easy about any more war on the part of France that Paris can help. Even now, while the last act of the tragedy seems thickening, and there is the possibility of a hitch and a postponement in the dropping of the curtain, Paris wants peace at almost any price, and wishes Gambetta dead. "No more fighting for us, thank you." I don't believe, if the war is continued in the south, that half a dozen Frenchmen will quit Paris to take part in it. Over the

Mairie of La Chapelle hung a white flag as I passed, blazoned with the inscription, "La Patrie est en danger; Formation des compagnies de marche; Appel aux volontaires." Bless you, it might have been a Hebrew text for all that anybody regarded it. The *patrie* and the marching regiments might go hang, if the provision trains would only come in fast enough into the Terminus du Nord. Their speedy advent is indeed still wanted badly. There was no bread distributed yesterday in the arrondissement of Passy, and turbulent Belleville exhibited a scarcity. Dr. Innes has seen to the ambulances with a zeal and discretion that cannot be too highly commended. That omnibus of his, which must be like the wizard's inexhaustible hat, is talked about everywhere. How he pulled out of it first himself, then rabbits, turkeys, loaves, ham, vegetables, four sheep (I don't know if they were alive), and a quantity of little odds and ends, in the shape of chests of Liebig and other small deer! How he consorted with Dr. Gordon, and how the energetic pair bustled out the good things all round the ambulances, going the length, indeed, in their urgency, of requisitioning the carriage-horse of the Ambassador of a foreign Power! But no doubt you have heard of all this already, and also of the unobtrusive charities towards distressed Britons in Paris of Mr. Blount, who is now our interim Consul. I hear he has given away thus more than 3,000*l*.

General Vinoy still continues to reside at the Louvre, where also is Trochu. Both seem anxious to have their cases put favourably before the world, and it is likely enough there is a little rivalry. Vinoy is the more capable man of the two seemingly, knowing how to hold his tongue and how to hold his hand, when it is not wise to speak or to smite. Yesterday he was visited in a white heat by General Richard, who fulminated furiously against the roughs in Versailles for having insulted him and abused him before the Provisional Government. "If the scoundrels do so again," quoth the irate Richard, "I will draw my revolver, and shoot down some of them." "Well, General," replied Vinoy, with a sententiousness like that of Abraham Lincoln, "there are times when a man's revolver is best in his pocket."

The *entente cordiale* between the authorities is not on the increase, rather the reverse. There are hitches about the exchanging of prisoners; and then it seems as if Paris in her great strait will eat up the environs, and superinduce a want of everything but bare rations among the Germans. This is nearly done already. At the Crown Prince of Saxony's head-quarters I have not for a long time experienced any difficulty in procuring anything

usually sold in a country grocery shop. This morning, prior to setting out for Paris, I went to fill my wallet with sardines, cheese, sausage, ham, and sundry other viands that might not as yet be plentiful inside the city. Both our shops were cleaned out. All you could buy was writing paper, candles, and blue ball, none of them of an eligible description for edible purposes. Versailles is nearly as thoroughly depleted, I believe, and the Germans are now instituting some species of check on the irregular introduction of food into Paris—a course which does not by any means tend to their popularity. They are, however, toiling very hard to send on food trains by the railway. It may not be generally known that, although persons in German uniform are not permitted to enter Paris, very many notables of the besieging army have already been inside in mufti.

The Special Correspondent at Paris wrote on the 9th of February:—

I find that the first impression produced on visitors to Paris is incredulity as to the distress of the people. These visitors go into the restaurants and see plenty of food there, which they can eat with pleasure, and they conclude that there has been no great suffering—no great privation. I know two gentlemen who came into Paris with provisions—a fowl and a turkey—and who have so little imagination, that as they saw fowls and turkeys in the shop windows, and fowls on the bills of fare at the restaurants (where, however, the price for the wing of a fowl was ten francs), they determined to look after themselves in the first place, and quietly eat their fowl and their turkey. They were unable to imagine the condition of men and women who had been feeding for months on one kind of food, which had become nauseous to them; and who had too much self-restraint to express any craving for fresh food, to which they knew perfectly well that other sufferers were still better entitled—men and women who had been absolutely starving. Fortunately for myself, I was able to gaze without envy on the fowl and turkey I speak of. Kind friends in London and at Versailles had very quickly sent me in stores, so that I was comparatively well off; but I know of several to whom a bit of fowl or any good English meat would have been a godsend. The men who had no imagination could not understand this—could not imagine concealed hunger and the craving for a change of food; and when they went into the restaurants, replenished by the opening of communications with the provinces, they tasted of certain stews, and, in the spirit of Mr. Squeers, smacking his lips over the diluted soup of his pupils, they cried, “Here’s richness!”

The Special Correspondent with the Crown Prince of Prussia wrote, on the 13th, from Paris :—

There are so many poor families returning to the abandoned villages round Paris, and so many returning to homes more or less desolate within the city walls, that one constantly meets parties of women and children on the move, with truckloads of furniture and baskets of provisions. The mere ebb and flow of the human tide in the Parisian faubourgs which have been under bombardment has been very great. Thousands who fled for a time, and found what shelter they could elsewhere, have returned home since the beginning of the armistice. But they had news of their dangerous dwellings even whilst they were absent—Paris was keenly alive to all that went forward within the walls—and they could reconnoitre the neighbourhood as often as they pleased. It was among the outlying villages and the people of the immediate scene of hostilities that the dreary blank of the siege time was most oppressive. When I travelled on an omnibus to Pont du Jour the other morning, I found myself surrounded by returning refugees. They were bound to their home in Billancourt, of which they had heard nothing for so long that they feared it must be in ruins. But the husband had been out to look for the house as soon as it was possible to visit the outposts, and he had come back to tell them that the damage was not very great. The windows and doors were broken, and one shell had gone through the roof. Except that, all was in good order. “And where was the husband now?” I asked, for the party round me, shivering with cold and laughing with joy, on the top of the omnibus, consisted of two women and half a dozen children. “Oh, he is gone with our goods, monsieur; he has hired a little cart, and he and Adolphe are taking the furniture home.” Adolphe is a rudely strong boy, well able to help, and the women laugh at the thought of this rude strength in an urchin of eleven. One woman is the mother, or rather the grandmother, though her first character is constantly brought forward by the married daughter, who invariably calls her *mère*. “Now, then, *ma mère*, hold Josephine tight. She will let the basket fall, her fingers are so cold. Do you see the cart, mother? We shall pass it soon. How hard they push it! That boy is almost as strong as his father;” and we catch a glimpse of a bright young face looking up from the side of an anxious, haggard man, who can scarcely “tackle” the weight of his household goods, small as they are. The children all look back with envy at the proud position of Master Adolphe, and an elder sister just saves the youngest boy from pitching off the omnibus in his excitement. As to little Josephine, she

is caught up and hugged by that feeble-minded hard-handed old grandmother, who chuckles with delight at seeing the furniture so well advanced on its way. I hear no complaints against the Government or the weather. "Go to, then," says one woman, "it is not pretty to ride on the top of the omnibus with so many children."—"But they cannot walk so far," replies another, "for we shall have yet a long way when we pass the ramparts, and if there are no places inside, what can we do but ride on the top?" I watch them alighting with no little amusement, for every one who is bigger and stronger than any one else takes care of that person. The elder sister and the small brother help to hand down little Josephine; and the grandmother takes care of all the bundles until I have passed them down for her. Then the column of march is formed, and, often looking back to see whether papa is behind them, they set forward towards the abandoned home. "Only doors and windows broken," cries the *grand'mère*. "Why, it is not so very cold now; and we shall have them mended before the winter—and the house might have been burned!"

M. Thiers, the Plenipotentiary of France, as well as the head of its Government, arrived in Paris from Bordeaux late on the night of Monday, the 20th of February, and on the following day proceeded to Versailles. The resolution of the Assembly on M. Keller's proposal, respecting Alsace and Lorraine, had left him free to sign preliminaries of peace on the best terms he could obtain; but the circumstances against which he had to contend might well appal the stoutest heart. Nevertheless, he prepared to make the best possible fight for his country on the only field that now remained to her. Count Bismarck's demands were known in their generality, and it would be in vain to struggle against any resolution which he might have definitely adopted; but there was always the chance that something might be included in his conditions on which he would not think it worth while to insist. The Imperial Chancellor required large territorial cessions, including some of the finest fortresses of France, and an immense pecuniary indemnity, and he announced that the Emperor, his master, reserved the right of occupying Paris with a military force. The principle of a pecuniary indemnity, and that of a surrender of territory, were no longer rejected by French statesmanship; and it remained to be ascertained to what extent Count Bismarck would push them. M. Thiers found that Germany would require as a war indemnity the payment of five milliards of francs, or £200,000,000. The demand was resisted as one without precedent in history—one the very attempt to comply with which would derange the finances of the entire world.

France had been weighed down with German requisitions for seven months, Paris having only just paid a war contribution of eight millions sterling, and she had her own war debt to provide for. The interest of the loan that would be necessary to provide such an indemnity as that demanded would utterly crush the great body of the taxpayers of France, make their position intolerable, and lead them to prefer war at any risk to life under such burdens. The Imperial Chancellor was inexorable. France had caused the expenditure of the Germans, and France must defray it. Moreover, as M. Thiers had just said in the Assembly at Bordeaux, France was still young, vigorous, and full of resources, and immense economies might be effected by cutting down the war-budget. It was in vain to contend with the master of legions, and M. Thiers consented that France should bind herself to make the required payment.

The territorial surrender gave more trouble. It was known that Alsace, with Strasburg, must be sacrificed, but a struggle must be made for Lorraine, and, above all, Metz, the glory of military France, must be saved, if that were possible. For days the conflict raged once more around this fortress. M. Thiers reasoned, pleaded, and prophesied, and on the 22nd personally waited on the Emperor and the Imperial Prince of Germany to lay his appeal before them. Those august personages received him with politeness, but finally remitted him to the tender mercies of the Chancellor. M. Thiers was ready to redeem the fortress, to level it with the ground, to give pledges against its restoration; but in vain. Metz had been won with the best blood of Germany, and M. Bismarck professed himself unable to overrule the firm determination of the German people henceforward to hold it as a bulwark of the Fatherland. As compensation, Count Bismarck was willing to restore to France the strong fortress of Belfort, lately surrendered to General Treskow after a long and arduous siege; and M. Thiers was compelled to be satisfied with this concession.

Before a complete understanding had been arrived at on these points the Armistice was about to expire. In the Convention it was declared to extend from the 28th of January to the 19th of February, and subsequently, on account of the delays that had taken place at Bordeaux, and still more on account of the time consumed in journeying between Bordeaux and Versailles, it had been necessary to prolong it until Friday, the 24th of February. At the request of M. Thiers it was again extended until Sunday, the 26th, but with an intimation from Count Bismarck that no further time would be granted. The German statesman further announced that, in the event of the signature of a treaty, a German corps would occupy Paris from the date of the expira-

tion of the armistice until the ratification by the Bordeaux Assembly. M. Thiers, who knew that the Parisians were not prepared for such an occupation, and that it would wound their feelings even more than some of the most onerous obligations of the treaty, struggled hard to avert this humiliation ; but he could only obtain a promise that in settling the manner and extent of the occupation his representations should be considered.

The negotiation of these conditions occupied Count Bismarck and M. Thiers the whole of six days. On Saturday, the 25th of February, the two statesmen were together for eight hours and a half, and the preliminaries were not signed until 6 P.M. of the following day. On Saturday and Sunday the anxiety of Paris rapidly increased. At the beginning of the week several of the newspapers had professed to be authorized to state that peace was certain, that Count Bismarck was showing a conciliatory disposition, and that the terms would be less onerous than was commonly supposed. By the end of the week the truth became known, and it was rumoured that the military occupation of Paris, and even the resumption of the war, might take place within a few hours. On Monday, however, each Government made known the fact that a peace had been signed. The Emperor of Germany transmitted a congratulatory circular despatch to the Sovereign Princes of Germany, in which he said,—

“ With a heart filled with thankfulness, I announce to you that yesterday afternoon the preliminaries of peace were signed here, by which Alsace, without Belfort, Lorraine, with Metz, was ceded to Germany. Five milliards are to be paid, and portions of France are to remain occupied until the amount is paid. Paris will be partially occupied if the ratification at Bordeaux follows. We are now at the end of a glorious but bloody war, which was forced upon us with frivolity without parallel, and in which your troops have taken so honourable a part. May the greatness of Germany be consolidated in peace ! ”

The *Journal des Débats*, in announcing the peace, stigmatized the cruel use which the conquerors had made of their victory, and said that, owing to the severity of the territorial and pecuniary demands of Count Bismarck, MM. Thiers and Favre were several times on the point of breaking off the negotiations and risk seeing the war recommence. The Commission of Fifteen Deputies shared the emotion of the negotiators, and it was with heavy hearts, and hoping only in the justice of God, that they submitted to dire necessity. On Monday also it was known that the Germans intended to enter Paris, and many battalions of National Guards of Paris formed the patriotic intention of resisting the entry by force, and, supposing it was to take place at once, went out on Monday night, and remained under arms.

General Vinoy severely reprimanded their conduct in an order of the day, but tumultuous manifestations of armed men continued, and the city was in a state of intense excitement. The streets were filled with people standing in groups, vowing vengeance against Germany, and imprecating curses upon all Emperors. The situation was becoming dangerous. Mobiles were breaking into prisons and releasing persons under sentence. The National Guard, which, it will be remembered, retained its arms, began to remove its cannons, and place them in new positions without orders. To allay the excitement M. Thiers and M. Picard appealed to the public in the following proclamation:—

“Inhabitants of Paris,—The Government appeals to your patriotism and wisdom. You have in your hands the fate of Paris. Upon you it depends to save or destroy France herself. After a heroic resistance, famine compelled us to give up the forts to the victorious enemy. The army which we had hoped would be able to help us was driven back beyond the Loire, and incontestable facts obliged the Government and the National Assembly to open negotiations. During six days the negotiators fought foot by foot, and did what was humanly possible to obtain the most favourable conditions, and have signed the Preliminaries, which will be submitted to the National Assembly. During the time necessary for the examination and discussion of these Preliminaries hostilities would have recommenced, and blood would have uselessly been shed, had the Armistice not been prolonged.

“This prolongation could only be obtained on the condition of a partial and very temporary occupation of a quarter of Paris. If the Convention be not respected the Armistice will be broken, and the enemy, already master of the forts, will occupy, in strong force, the entire city. Private property, the works of art, and the public monuments are guaranteed to-day, but should the Convention cease to be in force misfortune will await the whole of France. The fearful ravages of war, which hitherto have not extended beyond the Loire, will then extend to the Pyrenees.

“It is absolutely true to say that the safety of Paris affects the whole of France. Do not imitate the fault of those who did not wish us to believe eight months ago that the war would be so fatal. The French army, which defended Paris with so much courage, will occupy the left of the Seine, and will insure the loyal execution of the new Armistice. The National Guard will undertake to maintain order in the rest of the city, as good and honoured citizens who have shown themselves to be brave in the face of the enemy; and this cruel situation will end in peace and the return of public prosperity.”

The issue of this proclamation had an excellent effect, seconded

as it was by the advice unanimously given by the conductors of the Paris newspapers not to subject the capital to an unlimited occupation, to be accompanied by fresh exactions.

M. Thiers left Paris on the night of Monday, the 27th of February, and arrived at Bordeaux at 2 P.M. on the 28th. A sitting of the Assembly was at once held, at which M. Thiers rose, in the most profound silence, and said,—

“We have accepted a painful mission, and after having used all possible endeavours, we come with regret to submit for your approval a bill for which we ask urgency.”

The Bill was as follows :—

“Art. 1. The National Assembly, forced by necessity, and not therefore being responsible, adopts the Preliminaries of Peace signed at Versailles on the 26th of February.”

At this point M. Thiers was overpowered by his feelings, and obliged to descend from the tribune, and leave the hall. M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire continued to read the Preliminaries.

“1. France renounces in favour of the German Empire the following rights :—The fifth part of Lorraine, including Metz and Thionville, and Alsace, but without Belfort.

“2. France will pay the sum of five milliards of francs, of which one milliard is to be paid in 1871, and the remaining four milliards by instalments extending over three years.

“3. The German troops will begin to evacuate the French territory as soon as the treaty is ratified. They will first evacuate the interior of Paris and some departments lying in the western region. The evacuation of the other departments will take place gradually after payment of the first milliard, and proportionately to the payment of the other four milliards. Interest at the rate of 5 per cent. will be paid on the amount remaining due from the date of the ratification of the treaty.

“4. The German troops will not levy any requisitions in the departments occupied by them, but, on the other hand, will be maintained at the cost of France.

“5. A delay will be granted to the inhabitants of the territories annexed to decide for themselves severally to which of the two nationalities they will adhere.

“6. Prisoners of war will be immediately set at liberty.

“7. Negotiations for a definite treaty of peace will be opened at Brussels after the ratification of the treaty.

“8. The administration of the departments occupied by the German troops will be entrusted to French officials, but under the control of the chiefs of the German corps of occupation.

“9. The present treaty confers upon the Germans no rights whatever in the portion of territories not occupied.

"10. The treaty will have to be ratified by the National Assembly of France."

After the reading of these Preliminaries, M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire read the document relative to the entry of 30,000 German troops into Paris, and said that the contracting parties had severally reserved the right to give notice for terminating the Armistice after the 3rd of March. In that case a delay of three days must elapse before the resumption of hostilities. The Government asked the Assembly to declare the urgency of the discussion of the Treaty.

M. Thiers made a touching and passionate appeal to the patriotism of the Assembly, in the painful situation in which the country was placed.

Several deputies for Paris, supported by M. Gambetta, offered motions in favour of delay, whereupon M. Thiers said: "We, like you, are the victims of a state of things which we have not created, but must submit to. We entreat you not to lose a moment. I implore you to lose no time. In doing so you may perhaps spare Paris a great grief. I have engaged my responsibility, my colleagues have engaged theirs, you must engage yours. There must be no abstention from voting. We must all take our share in the responsibility." M. Thiers concluded by expressing the wish that the Committee should meet that evening at nine o'clock, and that a public sitting of the Assembly should be held on the next day at noon.

In Wednesday's sitting of the Assembly, M. Victor Lefranc read the Report of the Committee on the Preliminaries of Peace. It recommended their immediate acceptance by the National Assembly, as their refusal would only involve the occupation of Paris, the invasion of the whole of France, and terrible calamities. The Committee earnestly urged the Assembly not to adopt so desperate a step, and expressed confidence that no member would, in the circumstances, fail of his duty. The Assembly was much agitated. M. Edgar Quinet protested strongly against the acceptance of the Preliminaries, as such conditions would destroy the present and future of France. M. Bamberger, a deputy from the department of the Moselle, adjured the Assembly to reject the conditions, and concluded his speech by a condemnation of Napoleon III. When M. Conti, late Chief of the Emperor's Cabinet, rose and attempted to justify the Empire, the Assembly enthusiastically and unanimously voted by acclamation a resolution confirming the fall of the Empire, and stigmatizing Napoleon III. as responsible for the heavy misfortunes of France. Victor Hugo made a most impressive speech against the ratification of the Preliminaries. The Assembly, however, effected that ratification by 546 against 107 votes. Thus, then, were confirmed, by the

representatives of France, at the urgent entreaties of M. Thiers, the hard terms of peace against which he had struggled until further resistance would only have caused the German soldiery to be let loose upon Southern France.

On the same day (Wednesday, March 1) the German troops made their entry into Paris. After M. Thiers had left the capital, a dangerous revival of patriotic excitement took place, and to the last moment the authorities of Paris felt the most anxious concern for the peace of the city. All, however, passed off quietly.

The Emperor went early to Longchamps, and there inspected the troops of the 6th and 11th Prussian Army Corps, and the 1st Bavarian Army Corps—30,000 men—who were to occupy Paris. At 1 P.M. the Duke of Coburg, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, Prince Albrecht, Prince Adalbert, Prince Leopold—but neither the Emperor nor the Prince Imperial—entered with the army by the Arc de Triomphe, and marched through the Champs Elysées. The Palais d'Industrie and Cirque Impérial were assigned to the German troops, and a strong French force guarded the line which separated the occupied districts from the remainder of the city. The day passed off without serious accident, but was kept throughout Paris as one of mourning.

The ratification of the Treaty by the National Assembly having been notified by M. Jules Favre to Count Bismarck, Paris was evacuated by the Germans on the 2nd of March, and thus the homeward march of the victorious army seemed to have begun.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE letters, by the aid of which we have hitherto traced the events of the war from its declaration to its close, have made us spectators of scenes which shock the nobler feelings of humanity, and almost tempt us to despair of the future of our race. Before closing the volume we may be permitted to notice one enterprise which grew out of the publication of the correspondence of the *Daily News*, and on which the mind may dwell with a serener satisfaction than upon many of the events recorded in its pages. On the 21st of September, 1870, a correspondent wrote from Briey an account of the condition in which he found the people of the French villages between Metz, Nancy, and Sedan. It was there represented that in the sections of country that had been traversed by the hostile armies, nothing remained of the provisions that had been accumulated in time of peace. The houses, stables, and barns had been burned or riddled with cannon-shots. The

fields and meadows were trampled down by the tread of martial hosts. Neither cereals nor grass had been harvested that autumn. All the beasts of burden, and all their beeves, sheep, and swine had been taken from them. There remained not even seed-corn. Starvation stared the people in the face, and famine and pestilence were to be feared in the coming winter and spring. These representations were sustained by an array of local and other authority, which placed their accuracy beyond doubt, and in many quarters a hope was expressed that some opportunity might be allowed to the benevolent to manifest their sympathy with the suffering French in a practical manner. In this way "The French Peasant Relief Fund" arose. Just at the right moment, a gentleman with every qualification, Mr. W. H. Bullock, of Baliol College, kindly consented to proceed to the spot and administer the relief which English beneficence was affording, and he has continued the work in association with a number of colleagues, whose sufficient reward is the satisfaction of seeing suffering mitigated and sorrow diminished by their labours. Of those whose hearty co-operation should not be unrecorded, the names may be mentioned of Mr. R. D. Wilson, of Lincoln's Inn; Captain Goodenough, R.N.; Captain St. John Mildmay, Rifle Brigade; Mr. W. Cross, Weybridge Heath, and Miss Cross; Mons. André Ninnin, banquier, Sedan; and Mr. A. Jerningham.

The good work was continued without interruption, as without ostentation, until March, 1871, by which time more than £21,679 had been contributed by the public for the humane object of the Fund. Included in this amount is £164, the proceeds of a lecture delivered by the Rev. Père Hyacinthe at the Hanover Square Rooms.

The following are extracts from some of Mr. Bullock's letters:—

Falaise, near Vouziers, Nov. 9.—Although to eyes like my own, accustomed to the almost daily spectacle of Bazeilles—which is a most awful memorial of human vengeance, wreaked, too, on victims of whose innocence I have been at the utmost pains to convince myself, a spectacle in itself more than enough to make one despair of nineteenth-century or any other kind of civilization—it is hardly possible for any sight to appear melancholy in comparison; yet the aspect of the blackened ruins of some thirty houses at either end of this unfortunate village impressed me afresh this morning with the dreadful and literal reality of what are called the horrors of war. With the exception, however, of Beaurepaire, which nine days ago was a hamlet, containing about thirty families, but is now a

little Bazeilles, with a single family lodging in the single out-house which remains, I am rejoiced to be able to report that the march of the German armies was not traceable by burnt houses or villages, or any conspicuous exterior marks of wholesale devastation. Of interior pillage I heard everywhere; but, unwittingly, an almost irreparable injury has been done to the peasant-farmers by the passage of the Germans, in whose wake the rinderpest followed so destructively, that in the commune of Grand Pré alone, which before the war possessed from 240 to 250 horned cattle, only fourteen now remain! A tenant-farmer named Hunin, with whom I lunched yesterday at his farm of Barbençon, in the immediate vicinity of Grand Pré, informed me that he had buried seventy-four beasts in four days, the great majority belonging to the German troops, and quartered on him for treatment. Of his own stock of sixty-six beasts before the war, but one cow and one calf remain, fourteen having died of the cattle plague, eight having been carried off by the Germans, and forty-four having been sold in Belgium or elsewhere, for what they would fetch, to save them from otherwise inevitable destruction.

The hamlet of Beaupaire (for the immediate relief of which I left 100 francs in money preparatory to sending clothes and provisions) was fired on Monday, October 31, by a party of German troops, sent for that purpose by the Commandant of Grand Pré, in consequence of the presence of Francs-tireurs in the woods between Grand Pré and Vouziers, who harass the Germans on their march between the above-named places. A fortnight since a German captain and several soldiers were shot dead on the road, and it was considered necessary to set an example of the result of harbouring Francs-tireurs by burning the village suspected of the crime. But if armed Francs-tireurs come into a village to provision themselves, how is it possible for the innocent villagers to resist them, even if they had the will? So the village gets burned, and the women and little children are unhoused at the beginning of winter, besides losing the bulk of their linen, clothes, and bed furniture, which, for the sake of the credit of the Germans, I regret to say, is, as a rule, as far as my evidence extends at present, plundered, in the first instance, by the German soldiers, and then sold by them to the Jews or others, who are reported to follow the camp in waggons, which are despatched to the rear whenever an opportunity occurs. Of this infamous traffic I have for the last four weeks been collecting frequent indications, which almost amount to proof, although it is necessary to be unusually wary in accepting French evidence against the Germans.

The following letter from Mr. Bullock reports the death of Dr. Davis, the coloured physician, one of the noblest martyrs of this war:—

Sedan, Nov. 30.—I grieve to have to report the death of Dr. Davis, the coloured physician, which took place on Sunday last, November 27, at Pont Mangy, where he was devoting himself to every kind of good work, for the benefit of the poor operatives and peasantry of the surrounding villages. Dr. Davis's death will be felt as an irreparable loss, for in him the highest enthusiasm for the cause in which he was engaged was combined with great scientific attainments. Dr. Davis had but just returned from a ten days' visit to England, during which he had worked so hard in soliciting aid for his poor people, and travelled so continuously, that he was quite worn out when he got back to Pont Mangy. In spite of his fatigue, Dr. Davis insisted on visiting the military hospital at Sedan, where, going through the smallpox ward, he caught, as is supposed, the disease, which carried him off. During those trying weeks which followed the battle of Sedan, Dr. Davis devoted himself to the care of several hundred wounded Bavarians, whom he found in the direst need of medical aid and proper nourishment. Out of the funds entrusted to him by a few friends, he entirely supported his ambulance, where—if my memory does not fail me—on taking the management upon himself, he found nothing but a bottle of brandy and two lemons. Even before his wounded Bavarians were off his hands, Dr. Davis formed, and actually carried out, the project of establishing soup-kitchens at Pont Mangy and Balan, in behalf of the peasantry, of whose extreme want he was painfully aware. For he was assailed on all sides by the poor, who came daily in so distressed and emaciated a condition to consult him, that he decided that nourishing soup was the best medicine to prescribe for the majority. Finding during Dr. Davis's illness that these soup-kitchens were much in want of funds, with a probability of their beneficent operations being speedily arrested, I did not hesitate to subsidize them to the extent of £200 on Friday last, for which sum Mr. Hugman (Dr. Davis's assistant) gave me an acknowledgment. I am happy to say that, as far as we can see, there will be no interruption to the soup distribution, for the Pont Mangy kitchen will be carried on, I believe, by Mrs. Crookshanks, and that of Balan by those energetic and devoted ladies, the Misses Gulden, sisters of the Protestant pasteur.

So keen was Dr. Davis about his soup-kitchens, that a short time ago, when Miss Gulden told him that there was not sufficient

soup for all the applicants, he took the watch out of his pocket, which he had gained as a prize at college, declaring he would rather sell even that than suffer any to go away without soup. The University of Aberdeen, where Dr. Davis took his degree of M.D., may well be proud of him, and Barbadoes, where he was born, will hand down his name to posterity as a bright example.

Dr. Davis's memory will live in many hearts and in several lands, under various skies, but nowhere will it be more treasured than in the villages about Pont Mangy, whence, for years to come, one may venture to prophesy, pilgrimages will be made to the grave of "the good negro doctor," in the quiet nook at Fond de Givonne, where he was laid yesterday. To that grave he was followed by a long stream of sorrowing peasantry—a most touching and eloquent tribute to the memory of him whose devotion to them had cost Dr. Davis his life in the flower of his youth. There were not many dry eyes when M. Philipoteau, the Mayor of Sedan, concluded his address by the following words:—"Must it not be that God recompenses those who, like you, fall victims to their charity and devotion? Have we not the right to affirm to this numerous assembly, that, dying at the age of twenty-eight for the love of your kind, you have found there on high a bright immortality? May our ravaged districts not be long in finding a worthy successor of the good works of him who was known to us as '*le bon docteur noir!*' Adieu, Dr. Davis, adieu! or, rather, *au revoir!* if only, one day, God might grant us an ending resembling yours, however slightly."

At yesterday's ceremony French, Germans, and English attended indiscriminately, and the presence of Herr Strenger, the Prussian Sous-Préfet of Sedan, was a most satisfactory proof of the friendly feeling of the German authorities towards the efforts of neutrals to mitigate the horrors of war.

The following letters were written by Miss Cross, of Weybridge, a lady who has taken a most active and self-denying part in the administration of the Fund:—

Sedan, Dec. 13.—On my arrival at Sedan I had the good fortune to be at once introduced to the family of the resident Protestant pastor. I found them devoting their whole time in relieving the wants of the numerous sufferers by the present war. They had already established two soup-kitchens in the villages of Pont Mangy and Balan. Another was urgently needed at Givonne, a large village four miles from Sedan, with 1,400 inhabitants, whose houses had been pillaged and whose looms had been destroyed by the German soldiers. Funds

were needed; and Mr. Bullock, seeing how urgent was the necessity that nourishment should at once be given to the starving inhabitants, whose only complaint was want of work, decided to devote some of the money collected by the *Daily News* for that purpose. But to propose and to dispose are two very different things. We at once set to work to call on the Maires and Curés of Givonne, Daigny, Illy, La Chapelle, and La Moncelle—small villages near Givonne. We asked from the Maires a list of the poorest inhabitants, especially those without any prospect of work. This was promised without fail that day, or the next at latest. With a good deal of difficulty we managed to get possession of a kitchen in an empty house, the landlord kindly giving it us rent free. Mdlle. Gulden then secured the services of an excellent woman to make the soup, one accustomed to the work, and who had spent the last three months in nursing and cooking for the sick, under the management of Dr. Davis, the deeply regretted coloured doctor.

The meat, bread, vegetables, fuel, all were ordered for a certain day, but no lists were forthcoming. The whole country was white with snow, the cold intense, most of the cottages fireless, the people shivered under their miserable garments; the soup was ready waiting for them, but how were we to get them together without the lists? “Cela ne presse pas, que voulez-vous?” say the men, with their hands in their pockets. At last we have the names of all the people, and we want to see with our own eyes how they live from day to day. They are thankful for the bacon that has been lately distributed by your Society, and very thankful for the warm clothing; they point with pride to the one blanket which somehow manages to cover a whole family for the night. The very clothes from the women’s backs have been sold by the Germans. “I, who had three dozen shirts in the house, have only this remaining to me,” said a bright-eyed, handsome woman, pressing close her miserable-looking baby. It was a great consolation to think that the good soup would bring colour and beauty into the child’s face. The following day we lit our first fire in the dirty and damp kitchen; the stoves and other kitchen appliances were cracked and unavailable, the handle of the pump would not work, the water looked muddy, and things generally were cheerless, but our good cook did not lose heart. “You will see to-morrow when you come things will be cleaner, and the soup will be ready by mid-day.” So we left her, and set off on our way back to Sedan, with the snow still falling, and the roads in a dreadful state. Here and there a rough wooden cross stood out from the surrounding

whiteness, marking the place where are buried, one on the top of another, hundreds of men who fell on the battle-fields round Sedan. Mdle. Gulden pointed out to me the churches and cottages where the wounded were thrown in. These ladies attended to their wants day and night, shrinking from none of the horrors of their self-imposed duties, but still hundreds of lives were sacrificed for the want of immediate attention. One man, who had his leg amputated, escaped during the night from the sleepy surveillance of the *infirmiers*, and in his delirium dragged himself out on to the road as far as a cottage. The woman within, hearing a moaning cry, opened the door, and saw before her, in the moonlight, a man grovelling on the ground in his night-shirt. She lifted him in as well as she could, and offered him something to drink. "Non, non," cried the sufferer, pushing the cup from him; "j'ai soif de ma mère, j'ai soif de ma mère." He believed his mother was coming to him, and he had gone out to meet her. He died the next day with his thirst unsatisfied.

Our second day at Givonne was upon the whole satisfactory.

We started from Sedan at an early hour in the morning, with the snow thickly falling, but we had a warm welcome in our kitchen. The cook was busy among the pots, the pump-handle proved tractable; only the great *chaudron*, which was a fixture, was not yet in working order, so that we were short of our soup, and could only allow the people of Givonne to come. At a fixed hour they began to besiege the door, and were admitted four at a time. We armed ourselves with ladles, and began in good earnest helping the soup, cutting up the bread, and apportioning the little pieces of boiled beef taken out of the soup, which are looked upon as great delicacies. The curious receptacles brought to hold the soup were not, I grieve to state, sufficiently clean for so great an occasion; "Mais que voulez-vous en temps de guerre?" is the constant excuse. We forgot our own hunger in our all-engrossing employment, and were very thankful at the end of the day to take up the fragments that remained, and drink some hot cocoa before returning to Sedan.

On our arrival at Givonne the next day, we found the great caldron in working order, and already sending out great volumes of steam, so we felt sure that on this day no one would be sent empty away. The talkative crowd once more besieged the door, waiting hopefully in the cold for the warm soup. More than four hundred of the most necessitous received their portions, and the generous givers to the *Daily News* Fund would have been satisfied if they had seen the eager and

thankful way the miserable people received their soup. A great many were so disfigured by suffering and starvation that their faces seemed hardly human; some could scarcely get up enough voice to answer to their names. There was no pushing or quarrelling, and they patiently waited out in the falling snow for their turn. One little girl, twelve years old, who bravely walked some miles to get the soup for her family at Balan, replied, when asked if she did not find it too far, "Ah, no; for such good soup one would walk many miles." The last I saw of her was lying in bed (from which Mdle. Gulden had removed her two little sisters) dying patiently of typhus fever; her mother and the two sisters were all ill of the same fever, and, there being only two beds in the house, the two little ones were put beside the one that was doomed. She died the following day as bravely as she had lived.

Sedan, Jan. 10.—We were prevented from going to the distribution of soup at Givonne one day, and we found things had not gone on so well in our absence. Some of the recipients tried by all manner of means to obtain more than their just portions; the weakest went to the wall, and there was pushing and quarrelling. My companion made a most telling speech to the assembly before we commenced operations, saying that the Société Anglaise would at once shut up the kitchen if they made any difference in their behaviour when we were not there. The assembly, with many anxious gesticulations, promised everything under the sun. We then had the hard task to perform of striking out of the list some who, though poor enough, had already obtained work; others who were mendicants by profession, and whom the war had in no way affected; and others who had misrepresented their poverty. So little rancour, however, did a shaky old woman bear to one of the fault-finders, that she offered "ma fille," as she called me, her chaufferette, "as the floor was not made for such feet." These untrustworthy, clever, starving French peasants, bearing their sufferings heroically, have to be managed with strictness. It would be wholly disheartening to combat so much lying and deceit if it were not for the many bright instances of self-abnegation, of untold misery, and a quiet resignation to all the nameless horrors of this terrible war. Large as are the sums sent from England, and innumerable as are the garments worked by English hands, we feel it our duty to keep in mind that we must husband our resources for still harder times, and employ the fund strictly in the relief of the actually starving French peasantry. The next four months would have been for them a time of hopeless desolation if England had not come promptly

to their aid; and this splendid promise of grain will have more effect upon them morally than even the warm clothing or the soup. The prospect of sowing the grain will rouse them from their apathetic despair; it will give them work for the present, and hope for the future. When the men are not hanging listlessly about the doors of their untidy cottages, they are "en réquisition" for the Germans, *i.e.* employed to draw about goods for the army with the horse and cart that in brighter days was the peasant's greatest pride. Day after day they are employed to serve the enemy, and it would be idle to expect them to put any heart into their work. Many stories are told of the cruel exactions of the Prussians, and no doubt the stories are true. Exactions must be made, and during war the brutal nature of man comes uppermost; but there are, on the other hand, numberless acts of humane kindness shown to the suffering peasantry by the invading forces; one and all seem to be particularly kind to children. The other day a big stolid German seized a baby from a terrified nurse, covered it with kisses, returned it, and passed silently on his way. One meets on the road genial and kindly faces, with the square heavy chin and keen shrewd eyes; never that unreadable look in the countenance that is a puzzling element in a Frenchman's face. In passing along the beautiful high road that leads from Sedan to Givonne one forgets for a time the all-pervading misery. The road seems so peaceful and silent, now that the snow has covered the blood-red earth; only the rough-hewn crosses or a flock of greedy crows recall the terrible waste of life. Three Uhlans come riding abreast between groves of leafless trees, whose topmost branches have been carried away by the cannon balls; their lances are at rest on their stirrups, and as they approach nearer one is struck by their unwarlike appearance. They ride perfectly, but boyish commonplace faces peer out of the black helmets. Then come the little beggars: "Un peu de charité," whines one. "Tiens!" cries another, drawing away her companion, with a gleaming smile, "elles sont les Dames de la Soupe."

We have just returned from Mézières, the deplorable condition of which town has already been described in your columns. We were only able to get information from the Mayor. As yet nothing can be done. He says the people have at present plenty to eat; what they have not, they take; but the thing first to be done is to lodge them elsewhere; the air of the town is suffocating with the smell of burning bodies. A hundred have already been taken from the cellars. A crowd had collected round an opening. "What is it?" we ask. "Thirteen

dead bodies." We pass on amidst the falling walls, the overhanging beams. One feels as if one were playing a part (and that a helpless one) in some terrible tragedy. The peculiar look of a street with the houses on each side completely gutted; the people silently and in a dazed way passing up and down it. Is it all a dark dream? Can it be true that while we in Sedan were listening to the booming of the cannon on New Year's Day, thinking it was only the preliminary fright the Prussians were giving to the inhabitants before the white flag was hoisted, that the people were being driven wild with the fury of the fire, the noise of the cannon, and the crumbling of their houses? An unhappy woman sheltered herself in her cellar to give birth to a son; the house fell in, and she was found, charred and burning, with the little one carefully wrapped in her petticoat. And they have only begun to dig out the bodies. The Prussian soldiers are at work, too. We see people hanging over the bridge. "What is it?" we ask. "Only a leg." We were not able to enter any of the cellars, though we heard people were still living in them; nor were we allowed to approach the church. The steeple is expected to fall down every minute.

Sedan, Jan. 20.—Yesterday we went to see some of the families who are suffering from the *fièvre de la guerre*—in other words, famine fever. I don't think it is on the increase, but it does not seem to diminish much: the rate of mortality, especially among children, would be very high, if it were not for the help sent from England. We found one poor mother in a state of stupefied despair, hanging over the bed of her little daughter, who looked as if she had not many hours to live—the eyes closed, the face drawn-looking and grey, and the pulse very high. She was gasping for breath, and the poor woman was trying to rouse her. "If this one dies," said she, gazing at her child with sombre tearless eyes, "it will be the worst I can go through." The suffering little head lay upon one of those uncomfortable paper cushions. The father lay in another bed near his child, his cheeks flushed, and his sad eager eyes following every movement of the little sufferer. We left wine, concentrated milk, and cheese for the woman, who, since the illness of her husband and child, had lived upon a little bread and bacon, lying in a dirty corner of the floor. She had not thought of asking one of her neighbours to fetch her bouillon from the kitchen. She gets it now, and her husband has lemons and sugar to make a refreshing drink. To-day we found the little one lying quiet and white—the expression of pain had left her face; there will be no more suffering for

her. As for the mother, it seems hard that one woman should have so much to bear; her mother and sister died of the same fever, and her husband now raves in his delirium about his broken and burnt utensils. He was a thriving ironmonger at Bazeilles, and in a corner of the room lie, in a little heap, the smashed implements of his trade. My companion promised him new irons; so that when he got better he could begin to work again at once. A gleam of hope passed over his troubled face for a moment; but then he glanced at the little motionless white head on the opposite bed, and sank back again on his pillow. They live now in a sort of loft—very dirty and cheerless, and with no means of ventilation except by the constant noisy opening of the door by the kind-hearted but indiscreet neighbours, who talk and groan in loud voices beside the sick beds, and express their opinion to the patients that they won't recover. A little farther on lives a family of seven in one small room; two are down with fever, and four were ill in bed. The ascent to the room was entirely dark, which was perhaps as well; the dirt of ages was on the stairs, the sweepings from the different rooms being deposited on the steps. It would be heartless to suggest to a half-starved, overworked mother of seven children the cleaning of the stairs; nor would the father, suffering from the "*saisissement de la guerre*," and sitting helpless and patient in the chimney corner, see the necessity of rousing himself to set right the disordered *ménage*. His loom is burnt, and his life and energy have gone with it. What I ought to do is to take a broom and shovel and set about it myself. I have not done it, and can find no excuse for myself. There is not nearly so much illness at Givonne since the establishment of the soup-kitchen, and I hear the same remark in other places where they have been established. The little girls in bright new English petticoats, a coquettish English scarf or handkerchief round their necks, and their black hair tucked back under quaint caps. "Is it necessary," asks a pleading little voice, "to go back for the forgotten ticket?"—"Yes, quite necessary," we answer; otherwise the number of the family is apt to be strangely multiplied. I have known a family increase, in the space of an hour, from five to eight persons. We use 70lb. of beef at 58 centimes a pound, and 40lb. of bread daily. Trade is reviving at Givonne since the English gold is paid so regularly once a week to butchers, bakers, and grocers. No questionable "*bons*," but ready money, which is the crying need just now. If the Society could keep up the soup-kitchens for two months longer, it would be the surest means of staying the plagues of famine

and fever. The much longed-for blankets have arrived from England, and are being promptly distributed. All that one hears here is false news; we know nothing of what is happening, except from the *Daily News*, which is our only literature, and one feels guilty in reading even that when there are so many calls on one's time.

On the 2nd day of May, 1871, a balance sheet, showing the receipts and expenditure of the French Peasant Relief Fund, was published in the *Daily News*, to which the following certificates—the first by a firm of professional accountants, the second by Mr. Charles Buxton, M.P. for East Surrey, and Mr. Walter Morrison, M.P. for Plymouth—were appended:—

This account is made from various documents and vouchers, examined by us, and in our possession.

The distribution of the Fund has been effected without any administrative cost, the gentlemen who undertook the work having defrayed their own travelling expenses and hotel charges.

The *Daily News* has not charged the Fund with any of the expenses incurred in its collection and distribution, and has inserted all the advertisements pertaining to it gratuitously.

BAUER, STEPHENSON, and Co.,
Public Accountants, 82, Cheapside, London,
April 25, 1871.

We have satisfied ourselves of the correctness of these accounts, and of that of the above statement, and we wish to add, that in our opinion the most cordial thanks of the contributors are due, in the first place, to Mr. W. H. Bullock, who for six months gave the whole of his time, and underwent severe labour, in the distribution of the funds; and also to Mr. R. D. Wilson, Captain Goodenough, R.N., Captain Herbert, St. John Mildmay, Mr. W. C. Cross and Miss Cross, who at various times shared in his labours;

And also to Mr. J. R. Robinson for his gratuitous and unceasing labour in the administration of the business of the Fund;

And to the Editor of the *Daily News* for the invaluable assistance he has given.

CHARLES BUXTON, }
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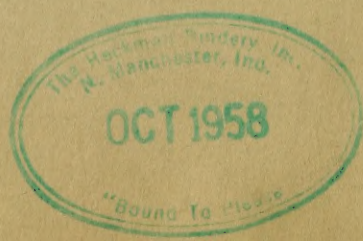
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